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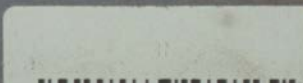

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CIVILISATION AT THE CROSS ROADS

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CIVILISATION AT THE CROSS ROADS

FOUR LECTURES
DELIVERED BEFORE HARVARD UNIVERSITY
IN THE YEAR 1911
ON THE WILLIAM BELDEN NOBLE FOUNDATION

BY

JOHN NEVILLE FIGGIS, LITT. D.

OF THE COMMUNITY OF THE RESURRECTION
HONORARY FELLOW OF ST. CATHARINE'S COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE

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S. B. F.

THE WILLIAM BELDEN NOBLE LECTURES

This Lectureship was constituted a perpetual foundation in Harvard University in 1898, as a memorial to the late William Belden Noble of Washington, D. C. (Harvard, 1885). The terms as revised by the founder and accepted by the President and Fellows of Harvard College, November 26, 1906, provide that the lectures shall be delivered annually, and, if convenient, in the Phillips Brooks House during the season of Advent. It is left with the Corporation to determine the number of lectures. Each lecturer shall have ample notice of his appointment, and the publication of each course of lectures is required. The purpose of the Lectureship will be further seen in the following citation from the deed of gift by which it was established: —

"The object of the founder of the Lectures is to continue the mission of William Belden Noble, whose supreme desire it was to extend the influence of Jesus as the way, the truth, and the life; to make known the meaning of the words of Jesus, 'I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.' In accordance with the large interpretation of the Influence of Jesus by the late Phillips Brooks, with whose religious teaching he in whose memory the Lectures are established and also the founder of the Lectures were in deep sympathy, it is intended that the scope of the Lectures shall be as wide as the highest interests of humanity. With this end in view, — the perfection of the spiritual man and the consecration by the spirit of Jesus of every department of human character, thought, and activity, — the Lectures may include philosophy, literature, art, poetry, the natural sciences, political economy, sociology, ethics, history, both civil and ecclesiastical, as well as theology and the more direct interests of the religious life. Beyond a sympathy with the purpose of the Lectures, as thus defined, no restriction is placed upon the lecturer."

CONTENTS

I. Armageddon or the Intellectual Chaos . 3

II. Babylon or the Moral Crisis 65

III. Calvary or the Challenge of the Cross 121

IV. Sion or the Christian Fact 179

Appendix. King Richard the Third and the Reverend James Thompson 235

Notes 273

PREFACE

MYSTICAL titles are not much in fashion. Yet I have kept the alternative names of each Lecture, because they suggest even more than they express of the nature of the book. Their apocalyptic associations may also serve to guard against misconception. The title of the whole course and certain criticisms in the first Lecture might seem to imply that I desire to controvert the main thesis of the late Father Tyrrell's famous work.* This, however, is not the case. Too greatly am I in debt to all the writings of that arresting author and especially to his posthumous work to have any such thought. But I do desire to point out that the problem can be studied from more standpoints than one. Something is crumbling all around us. That is clearer every moment. I write this on the day of the introduction of the Bill for a Minimum Wage. Is it Christianity that is decaying, or civilisation in its existing shape? That conventional Christianity is going or gone, no one will question. So much

* *Christianity at the Cross Roads.* Longmans.

the better. But on the whole it seems to me, that what is vanishing is not that peculiar kind of social life we call the Christian Church, except certain accidental elements inextricably bound up with the existing régime. Rather, we are in the midst of a process not unlike that of Western Europe in the Fifth Century, when the world-organisation was on its deathbed, and the Church alone remained unshaken. The more I contemplate the face of things the more does there come before me the vision of a whole order changing. In a few years, we shall, perhaps, be saying something like what Luther said three centuries and a half ago about the Holy Roman Empire: —

"Die Welt ist am Ende kommen, das römisch Reich ist fast dahin und zerrissen." This change is universal; but the Christian Church will survive it, on the very ground that it possesses many elements incompatible with our present system, and that its spirit is the scorn of all that is fashionably enlightened. That scorn will doubtless be the fortune of the present volume. Indeed this must be the case with any attempt to commend the traditional faith in an age which finds interest in any and every fantasy, but dismisses *a priori* the Catholic creed. I am not however greatly disturbed by this thought. The mental habit of our day,

like other of its qualities does not appear to me so profound or lasting; and will undergo "a sea-change into something rich and strange" along with the other elements in our life. Thus if it should seem that these lectures are so many "Unzeitgemässe Betrachtungen," I should not grieve. They may not fit with the prevailing fashion among the "intellectuels." It is at least not inconceivable that the ground of this is that there is something imperfect in that fashion. A thing is out of date, because it looks to the future, no less than when it harks back to the past.

After this course was delivered, there was published in England a volume directly traversing that view of the nature of the Christian experience which is set out in the fourth lecture. Since the book appeared of some importance, owing to the controversy which it evoked, I have thought it well to devote an appendix to the general historical question which it involves. I suppose that no one who has watched the rise and fall of the uncounted historical theories, all plausible, which have appeared in regions far removed from the fever spot of Christian origins, is likely to be disturbed by Mr. Thompson's hypothesis. Since, however, these topics are oftentimes debated by persons whose acquaintance with general historical investigation is

other than obvious, I have thought it well to indicate some points a little more at large. In that appendix I should like to have quoted pages from the Chapter on "Causality and Natural Law," in Professor Wendland's admirable book *Miracles and the Christian Church*. But I read it too recently to make that possible. I would also refer to some remarks of Professor James Ward in the earlier part of his new series of Gifford Lectures — *Pluralism and Theism*, which bear on the relation of historical knowledge and real individuality to all theories of inevitable, unbroken cosmic development, mechanically interpreted.

Here I would only repeat with emphasis my persuasion that it is only after a judgment of the total character of the Christian experience, that we ever can (or ever do) profitably approach the investigation of its details. This is true on both sides, and is shewn in the present controversy. It is precisely this total supernatural character, which I believe to be as firmly established historically as anything of that nature can ever be — and to be disbelieved only on account of presuppositions incompatible with its truth. In this respect and certain others these lectures may serve as a sort of sequel to the earlier course delivered at Cambridge on the foundation of Dr. Hulse;

and may correct certain misconceptions, especially in regard to the third.

With slight alterations these lectures are printed substantially as they were delivered. Never a member of that company which regards a book as likely to promote the glory of God in proportion as it is ill written, I have taken pains to make it readable. But I cannot pretend to be satisfied with the result. Further delay, however, must not be thought of and such as it is, the book must go forth.

The Rev. Alexander Wicksteed is deeply my creditor. Owing to his kindness in reading the proofs and verifying references, I trust that the proportion of errors is less than has sometimes been the case with writings of the author; or than always would be without such aid.

Finally, I must tender my grateful thanks to the authorities of Harvard University, who by appointing me to this office of Noble Lecturer are "the only begetters" of the ensuing pages: I would hereby assure them that I would the book were more worthy of its "domicile of origin" and that I shall not soon forget the days that I spent in the enjoyment of their proverbial hospitality.

J. Neville Figgis.

House of the Resurrection,
March 21, 1912.

CIVILISATION
AT THE CROSS ROADS

CIVILISATION AT THE CROSS ROADS

LECTURE I

ARMAGEDDON OR THE INTELLECTUAL CHAOS

NOT long since a writer, who seemed to wield flame rather than words, directed all our thoughts to the topic of *Christianity at the Cross Roads*. And indeed the tragedy of Tyrrell's own life symbolised that crisis in thought of which the book was the expression. More than any of his works was his life an illustration of the momentous problems urgent at this moment on all reflecting men. How far can the new wine of modern knowledge and changed ways of thought be poured into the old bottles of traditional religion? Is the Christian Church (with whatever modifications) still to remain the depositary of the spiritual experience of the race, the dispenser of the gifts of grace, the home of the soul, and the instrument of all redemption; or

shall that supernatural claim be rejected as a phantom or transcended as a phase of history now drawing to its close? Allied to this topic there is another no less momentous, — that is, the condition, not of the Church, but of civilisation. Tyrrell appears to have thought that the knowledge of our day and its theories were so secure as to enable us from that standpoint to sit in judgment on the strange events which gave rise to the Christian Church, and also that the gifts of twentieth century civilisation were so strongly entrenched behind the walls of physical science that they could not be lost. Transferred they might be, say, to the yellow races, Europe reverting to another dark age; but lost, like the culture of the ancient world before the barbarian, that is not to be thought of.

Neither of these statements appears to me to be justified. In the first place there are so many aspects of life which our present day civilisation either ignores or depreciates that I fail to see how we can take its principles for anything more than a partial and abstract account of certain elements of the world. These elements

indeed it enables us to control. And we have achieved therein a success without parallel in the past and with yet greater promise for the future. But I do not conceive the scientific or mathematical temperament as in any way final. Large elements of life, the artistic, the social, the personal, it cannot handle, and when it tries to do so it is apt to come to grief, and this quite apart from religion. One side of science indeed, its reverence for fact, is leading it to recognise an element best described as supernatural in human life, and also to confess its own impotence to offer any interpretation of the world as a whole. Yet the scientific temperament, in ordinary speech, means more than this. It implies an assumption that knowledge can be arranged on a schematic basis, and that all events can be viewed as the unalterable issue of the past, because everything is bound together by the nexus of cause and effect mechanically interpreted, and there are in life no new beginnings. This assumption is opposed to any such scheme as the Christian, which teaches not merely a spiritual universe behind the natural, but

also the existence of a multitude of spirits with a real, though limited, freedom and shews us a world whose issues are unpredictable, with as many loose ends as there are individuals, instead of the rounded system of the universe *totus teres atque rotundus*, which, though far from being demonstrated or demonstrable, is the unalterable dogma of many modern enquirers.

Dr. Bussell shews how fatal this notion is to all belief in real individuality.[1] "Such "theoretical doubt can never seriously im- "pair the vital impulse, the enjoyment of "the struggle and doubtful issue. Perhaps "a more urgent, serious danger lies in the "strange hybrid of philosophic and reli- "gious thought, the metaphysical mysticism "which disconcertingly alternates emotion "and logic. To this reference has been and "will be so frequent that it is needless to "enlarge upon the obvious defect it shares "with all previous and kindred systems. "It neither explains nor justifies the per- "sonal, which, whether by accident or "providence or by some inscrutable yet "purposive law, seems to have been the "goal of development on the earth. After

"the painful discovery of the self as the "true seed of philosophy, practical ethics, "religion, and political agitation, it is use- "less to point out that the discovery is, after "all, worthless. We are still left with an "acute sense of its truth. But we can more "easily shake off a scientific fatalism which "momentary experience contradicts (at least "so far as our feelings go) than the benumb- "ing influence of Pantheism."

These assumptions of the scientific imagination are not incompatible with religion of a sort. The prevalence of Pantheism is easy to reconcile with the presuppositions of the mechanical temperament, which are dominant far beyond the limits of physical enquiry, and indeed are chiefly dangerous in that of morals and religion.[2] It is not to science, but to "scientific fatalism," as it has been well termed, that our difficulties are due. Only when science captures the imagination and seeks to subdue history, philosophy, and the individual life does she conflict with our religion. It is on these assumptions that popular objections to the Christian faith are based. The dislike of miracles, more particularly of the

Birth and Resurrection narratives, the hostility to the supernatural claims of Christ, to the doctrines of redemption and the sacramental gifts, in a word to the whole theology of grace, all this, so far as most men are concerned, has little basis beyond the suspicion that science can find no place for them and the assumption that science covers the ground. True, indeed, the world of fact, historical, artistic, personal, gives it the lie, and the moment you stop reasoning and start to live, the difficulties disappear. But it is just these facts that men obsessed by the dominant categories refuse to look at. There are on the one hand the practical achievements of science, denied by no one; results on the other side are less apparent, and even if admitted are supposed to be susceptible of explanation.

The greatest achievements of all, the peace of God ruling in the heart of the redeemed and the conversion of sinners, cannot, owing to their very magnitude and psychical nature, be represented to those without. And so minds enchained to the categories of continuity, of inevitable evolution, the laws of cause and effect mechani-

cally understood, all different names of the same notion, fall an easy prey to the determinist theory of personal action and the rationalistic projection of history. They treat as anthropomorphic and antiquated the world-old notions of sin and deliverance and crave for a vision cosmic and universal. So far as the mass of men goes, this tendency is only beginning, but if it be developed to the full it will sweep away with it all that is of value in our world. For Western civilisation, inherited from the Christendom of the Middle Ages, has been built on the faith in personal values and the reality of freedom.[3] This faith is now menaced, and in many places gone. It is largely lacking in the more characteristic products of the present day—all that seems most modern and freest from the past. Thus it is true to say that *civilisation is at the cross roads.* There is a ceaseless conflict between ideals which rest on the personal spiritual claims of the Christian life and that rigid mechanism to which many would reduce it; while, even among those who retain or revive their faith in freedom, some deny *in toto* the

Christian aim. So far as the Western mind has been moving away from personal factors (including of course those social unions in which alone personality can thrive) it is becoming more and more enslaved to categories which make Christianity appear not so much false as meaningless.[4] I may quote two instances. An agnostic friend once wrote to me, "I have never been able to make any meaning out of Revealed Religion." Another friend, not agnostic, once said, "I am interested in the cosmic and philosophical; you in the personal and redemptive. All that I have to learn. I hardly know what the words mean." That is the condition which the Christian has now to face — people who do not know what the words mean.

Moreover, the civilisation which the Western world inherits was erected on the belief that human nature through some act had fallen so low that it could only be raised by some power from without, and that redemption was brought by Jesus Christ and mediated by the Church. Such a doctrine of the fall, however qualified, seems out of relation to ideas now

fashionable, and the notion of redemption supernaturally achieved is quietly dropped. Further, there is a deeper tendency at work. This, while not denying God's existence, would confine Him to this life, and resents all claims that are fundamentally supernatural. Religion is in this view an idyll of human life, the uprising of the soul of man, but God never entered the world, never could enter it save as immanent in the whole of its growth; there are no violent breaks, no catastrophes, no unique personalities, no really new events. All goes on developing by a continuous process; religion, like the world, will ultimately destroy itself.

It is the aim of these lectures to traverse this view, to give grounds for holding that the world, as it now is, bears on the face of it the marks which call for redemption; that Christianity comes to us alone professing to have this power from beyond, and alone able to meet the universal need of deliverance. If the civilised world, saved by a remnant of faithful, accepts this evangel, it may rise to heights undreamed of. If, as many indications suggest, the

world at large rejects it, then civilisation may proceed on its course of God-denial for some generations or even centuries, but it is doomed like the ancient world; for no culture can go on existing without faith, and the forces of materialism already looming as a cloud will gather volume, until the land of the spirit is overshadowed.

For all changes notwithstanding, and with admitted modifications in details, the Christian Church faces men today, not as a theory but as a life, giving to many amongst us a sense of supernatural vision and redemptive peace to be gained nowhere else — hardly even offered. There, as a fact, is the spiritual home of many. Are there good grounds for deserting this refuge? Is the mental house of our life so compact and guarded that we can trust to it apart from this other? Does life, as we watch or feel it, allow or repudiate the sense that man needs deliverance? Is there among all opposing theories any one so certain or so comprehensive that it compels us to reject these venerable claims — claims not merely of the past, but effective now? To

these questions I shall seek to make some reply in the following four lectures.

In the first, surveying the world of men's reflections, I shall try to shew that the one outstanding feature is an anarchy without parallel, and that, in regard alike to fundamental beliefs or practical claims, however loud or insistent be the voices which bid us reject the Christian claim, they are in no way so united or so well grounded as to settle the matter *a priori;* they may not assist, they do not inhibit the faith of the Gospel. In the second lecture we shall glance at some of the outward features of the world, which indicate that human nature needs to be redeemed and lacks the force to effect deliverance for itself. Then, having dealt with the present situation, I shall in the third lecture endeavour to display the gigantic nature of the Christian claim, how the belief in the life beyond, in the love of God, in the gifts of grace, must change all our standards, so that Christians, whether or no they are better, are amazingly different from other folks; while the attempt to represent Christianity either as a sort of

decorated idealism or as a mere emotional altruism must be foredoomed to failure. Finally, in the fourth lecture, I shall discuss the alleged facts that lie at the bottom. We shall see there that the facts of the life of Jesus are one with the history of the Church and the experience of the individual Christian, that the problem is concerned with the nature of that experience. Of that experience there are two interpretations, the natural and the supernatural. We shall see that the latter is that which best correlates all the evidence, provided we are not inhibited from holding it through prepossessions derived from other sources. We shall conclude that if we believe the spiritual aspirations of mankind to be rooted in reality, the Christian as a member of the great Catholic, i.e., universal, society is the person most closely in touch with that reality; for he and he alone is at the centre of the spiritual experience of the race, and there in the Catholic Church he drinks "within beneath a spring," which is the fount and source of all redemption.

I said "in the Catholic Church." Here and elsewhere in these lectures I shall use

phrases or make statements with which some here will not agree. I cannot help it. Indeed it had been my hope to exclude such things; the more especially as I hold most firmly that all those who have a hold on the supernatural are being pressed together (not always with their own good-will) under the force of the attack. Of course I am using the term Church in the true sense, as the society of all the baptized, leaving out all the questions of organisation, of discipline, which divide men still further. Still there is no use saying that all nominal Christians are the same, when they are obviously different, or that there is no distinction between a Christian and a moralist. Moreover, a man's view of things is no mere theory; it is a part of him and must colour what he says. It is safer to avow it frankly beforehand than to make a profession of impartiality, which is always a delusion and in nine cases out of ten an imposture. If the Catholic principle be a matter of life even more than theory, that life is bound to shew itself in one who possesses or, to be accurate, is possessed by it. Nor indeed would I have dared to insult this great

University, which has given to me an office so honourable, by coming from Europe in order to say not what I do mean, but what I do not; or to omit integral elements in what is the very life of my spirit. You do not want in this place colourless nothings or the enunciation of sentiments which seem obvious because they are vital to no man's faith. You want a man with a man's hopes and doubts, his visions and his failures — all that he most vitally is — not a set of abstract theses, dialectically argued.

If, therefore, anything said here may seem to wound or set at naught the convictions of some who value the Christian name, or of some who do not, I can but crave your pardon and beg you to believe that I have set down nothing in malice, that I speak to you, as a priest in the Church of God, for that faith which lives in me. May He grant that the words be not all in vain.

In an arresting novel one of the most remarkable men of the last century wrote as follows: "Progress to what and from

whence? Amid empires shrivelled into deserts, amid the wrecks of great cities, a single column or obelisk of which nations import for the prime ornament of their mud-built capitals; amid arts forgotten, commerce annihilated, fragmentary literatures, and populations destroyed, the European talks of progress, because by an ingenious application of some scientific acquirements he has established a society which has mistaken comfort for civilisation."

Perhaps not many now read *Tancred.*[5] Yet that book is far more than mere romance. It is evidence of the dissatisfaction with modern civilisation, and its *parvenu* vanity felt even at that time by an acute observer. You know the theme; how the young English lord, weary of the intellectual and moral chaos of the West, sought in the East for that spiritual force which alone would raise Europe from her degradation. As he puts it, "Excepting those who still cling to your Arabian creeds, Europe is without consolation"; or again, "Amid the wreck of creeds, the crash of Empires, French revolutions and English reforms, Catholicism in agony, Protes-

tantism in convulsions, Europe demands the keynote which none can sound. If Asia be in decay, Europe is in confusion. Your repose may be death, but our life is anarchy."

These passages, and still more the general argument of the book, bring out the fact that in the mind of an observer whose allegiance to orthodox Christianity was not otherwise conspicuous, the spectacle of the Western world — for we must take the whole West together — presented itself in somewhat different colours from the rose tints it took on in the imaginations of that Manchester school which was then at the height of its power; that civilisation in the West, so far as we can separate its life and culture from the Christian forces, on which it still largely lives, is not in a state of which we are to be hilariously proud; that it needs redemption, that redemption must come from without and must take on a supernatural, transcendent character, and cannot come from a development of the principles of the Exchanges. It will involve in some degree those principles of asceticism and other-worldliness popularly regarded as

specifically Oriental, and inextricably involved in the Catholic religion as a spiritual society.

We are not, be it observed, drawing a Rousseauesque indictment against civilisation and exalting the noble savage *quand même.* For civilisation works hand in hand with religion, in so far as it treats men as ends not means, and by its ordered variety of life gives freer place to development. It is just these things, however, that are in question today; there we are at the Cross Roads. They are right who speak of the "Gifts of Civilisation" as they see the Church and culture marching hand in hand in the warfare with barbarism and unordered passion. Only, while civilisation begins by ministering to man as a spiritual being, by making freedom and all personal values a reality and preserving space for that leisure of spirit in which the peace of God may reign, it by no means ends at that point. Apart from a Godward outlook it may tend to destroy these personal values by permitting men to rest in the "much goods laid up in store" and allow the fortunate in a purely materialist ambi-

tion, while from its true benefits the masses of mankind may become more and more shut out. This has been its great vice in past history. It looks a little as though it were being repeated in the present. Do we not see before us a world intoxicated with material prosperity, reckless of the life of the spirit, and callous to the misery of vast masses of its fellow-men?

We may look back to the age when these spiritual ends of civilised life were partially attained and all its treasures enjoyed as the gift of God, but can the modern world claim as its own the glories of the ages which, so far from being dark, are still the refuge of souls wearied with the squalid fever of our time? It cannot. We must admit the profound difference between the thoughts and feelings of our own day and those of the age which produced the *Sainte-Chapelle*, the frescoes of Giotto, and the *Divina Commedia*. Nor would any statistics about railroads and steamships ever persuade me that a world of which these things are the characteristic symbols is inferior to that which flowers in the factory town or the mammoth hotel.

Medieval civilisation was no flawless crystal. Then as now many men gave free play "to the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life," but they did not worship these things. In all ages men have been bad. But the achievements of the thirteenth century were owing precisely to the opposite of these elements men most admire today. As a hostile writer puts it, "they had one *idée fixe*, religion." They may not have always served God very well, but they knew that He was "the chief end of man." That world presents neither the oleographic picture dear to sentimentalists, nor yet the mere battle of kites and crows conceived by Puritan and Renaissance pride. Yet its most notable qualities — the things that made it what it was — the cathedral, the minster, the university (and each of us here owes more to the University of the Middle Ages than he is apt to imagine), the orders of chivalry, the hierarchy of society, the communal life and all its pageantry, that unity which outlasted so much conflict, all these things were what they were because of men's faith in God and man

and the love which makes him free. None of them could have been at all in the form they took, had that faith not been present; and hence Walter Pater, summing up the qualities of the differing cultures of the world, speaks in the famous passage on Mona Lisa of "the reverie of the middle age with its spiritual ambitions and imaginative souls" as contrasted with "the animalism of Greece, the lust of Rome, the return of the Pagan world, the sins of the Borgias." Always rather by its ideals than its achievements do we judge a nation or epoch. These ideals can be seen reflected as in a mirror all through the life of the Middle Ages, in the peace as of a strange land which pervades the *Historia Ecclesiastica* of the great Northumbrian monk, the Venerable Bede, in the love and universal reverence felt for S. Francis even in his lifetime, in the mystery plays like *Everyman*, in the almost autocratic influence of a mystic like S. Bernard, even indeed in the strength of the Papacy (for it rested not on material force, but on the faith of men), above all in the most characteristic of all its fruits — books such as *The Imi-*

tation of Christ, similar works like the writings of Walter Hilton, or Richard Rolle, or Dame Julian, the anchoress of Norwich. All these are the natural fruit of the time; they express its spirit. So far as we have anything like them, it is rather as protests, reactions, the work of those who repudiate the prevalent ideals, *unzeitgemässe Betrachtungen*, as Nietzsche would call them. No one can deny the beauty of a work like the *Pathway of the Eternal Wisdom* or Tyrrell's *Oil and Wine*, but their distinction consists in thus expressing a side of life far from popular. The dominant feeling of the age shrieks itself hoarse in the newspapers and expresses itself artistically in the *New Machiavelli* or *L'Ile des Pinguins*, and I cannot feel convinced that we have gained by the exchange.

The world in the Middle Ages was far enough from the practice of holiness, but at least it did not question the ideal. What are men's ideals today? It would be hard to tell. But so far as their main energies are concerned and we can form any judgment as to what animates the man in the street, I cannot doubt that it is truer to say

that Christianity runs counter to our civilisation than that it fulfils it. In places indeed it remains intact, but they are as a rule those least touched by modern developments. The village church is the home of an immemorial piety alike in Bavaria or in Italy, in England or Ireland — I suppose also here; though this statement must be made with very large reserves, for there are districts abroad of which the very opposite is true, and I fancy that in some colonial places there would be an equal lack. But can that or anything like it be said either of the most educated or the most modern elements of society? Is it not rather the case, as one wrote to me of the business world, "Christianity counts for nothing, men simply leave it alone"? Or as another, an educated woman, said of a sermon on penitence, "It seemed to me all so unreal; I wondered how many of the people in that church had any inkling of what was meant"? That is the point; the ordinary Christian doctrines of grace, and sin, and pardon have become almost meaningless to many, and require translation before people will even listen to them. The phrases

of the New Testament seem to savour of the Sunday School novelette and have lost their vital force. Canon Carnegie, indeed, seems to desire to take this condition as a standard and to make the ordinary man's dislike of such terms as holiness or sin a reason for leaving the things out of our message. In his preface to *Churchmanship and Character*[6] he writes that "Christians to a large extent use a language which is not understood by ordinary folk. The ordinary normal healthy man understands what is meant by goodness; he becomes restive if we talk to him of righteousness. He understands what is meant by duty; he hardly listens if we talk to him of vocation. He understands us when we speak of moral depravity and regeneration and progress; he pays small heed to statements about sin and conversion and sanctification." The author's implied view is not merely that our language might be modernised, which may possibly be a good thing, but that the religion of healthy mindedness is practically to be taken as identical with the faith of redemption, and that the ideals which dominate the Birmingham business man

only need a little furbishing to be seen to be fundamentally Christian. Nothing would seem to me more opposed to S. Paul's doctrine; nor would his language have seemed rational to Horace or Suetonius. Christianity conquered by its difference from every other system. That is not to deny our duty of commending the faith by avoiding merely conventional or cant phrases, but of all heresies that of the religion of healthy mindedness seems to me to go the deepest. I quote the words as evidence of the existing condition, and also giving a succinct expression to the view against which these lectures are directed. If the world is to be brought back to Christ, it will not be by accepting its shibboleths and seeing God's revelation through eyes purblind with avarice or satisfied with the things of this world, but rather by dwelling on the strange new life He promises and re-awakening that sense of sin which has become unfashionable. A weightier witness is that of the great philosopher Rudolph Eucken. In the *Problem of Human Life* he speaks of "the severity of the conflict with modern civilisation into which Chris-

tianity has fallen. In its rich unfolding of life the modern world has brought an untold wealth of things new and great, whose influence no one can escape and whose fruits we all enjoy. But with this incontestable gain there is closely interwoven a characteristic tendency which is deeply involved in doubt and conflict. Since the beginning of the seventeenth century the modern world has wrought out a new type of life, which departs widely from the Christian. A powerful life-impulse forces the thinking and the activity of man more and more into the world which Christianity regarded as a lower one; in this world reason reigns, or wherever it is not yet present the labour of men seeks to create it; forces spring up *ad infinitum*, and the increase of power becomes the highest and all-sufficient goal of life. The greater the strength and self-consciousness which this new type acquires, the more evident it becomes that it is incompatible with, Christianity; in fact that the fundamental tendencies of the two run directly counter to each other. Their peaceable and friendly co-operation, such as existed in earlier times,

becomes impossible; a clear understanding is increasingly necessary; *continually harsher is the rejection of Christianity by those who follow the specifically modern tendency.*"[1]

Equally strong is the statement in another work, *Christianity and the New Idealism.* "The main tendency of our own age, with its steadily growing spirit of independence, has come into even sharper conflict with Christianity. That it had a stronger vitality, and made existence more dependent on man's own activity, would not necessarily have conduced to this result. The irreparable breach was due to the fact that for modern thought the activity and the positive trend of life was conceived as man's own immediate work, as the outcome of his own natural strength; whereas Christianity regarded them as emanating from man's relation to God, through an inward renewal of his being; its affirmation of life is not direct, but is only reached through negation and inward change. We must beware of weakening in any way the opposition between the Christian and the modern points of view — an opposition so

strong as absolutely to preclude any prospect of easy reconciliation."[8]

I quote these statements from a writer, who is very far from being a defender of ecclesiastical Christianity, as evidence that the conflict is not one on the surface or even about doctrine, but that it is a veritable Armageddon between the spirit of Christ and that of antichrist. And indeed those writers grossly err who argue as though all wise men were agreed on the fundamentals, that it was only in the formularies fabricated by priests that difficulty existed. The attitude of such a writer as William Scott Palmer, in the *Diary of a Modernist*, that the Christian ideal may be taken for granted and Nietzsche be ignored, may be true of certain coteries of culture, but it is profoundly false to the facts of life and ignores that deep and growing chasm which separates the aims of men. Speaking on the whole and dismissing the natural bias for counting on one's own side a majority, I should say that there are no longer grounds for believing that the Western world is Christian now in a sense in which it was not in the

period immediately preceding the peace of the Church under Constantine the Great. Of course Christian ideals still affect many who repudiate the Christian name, such as the Positivists. But does there seem much more ground for saying that we live in a Christian world, beyond what might have been said in the time of Tertullian? In many ways there is less ground. In a charming story of this country, *Lady Baltimore*,[9] the writer makes his society people talk of having given up religion, as though it were a recognised fact that even nominal adhesion to it had ceased. Nor do the statistics of church-going in England favour a different view, while in Lutheran Germany or what was until recently Catholic France an even worse dry rot has set in. So far as we can judge, Spain, Italy, and Portugal are in like case, while in the last the government has embarked on a definite policy of persecution, and in many districts of France it is said that the municipality is refusing to repair the churches or even to permit Catholics to do so at their own charges. The atmosphere in literature and art, in novels and dramas, in newspapers

and reviews is not only no longer Christian, but is largely anti-Christian, even on the ethical side. If you think of some of the names most honoured of late, Thomas Hardy, George Meredith, Mr. Arnold Bennett, Mr. Bernard Shaw, Mr. H. G. Wells, or Mr. Henry James, however different they may be in outlook, none of them can be called Christian, while for some it seems impossible to name the subject without a sneer; and neither M. Anatole France nor Ibsen can control their dislike of a religion which is to them mere convention. If further you enquired of the most highly educated society in the West, whether it is specifically Christian, I think the answer is not doubtful. Would there be a very large proportion of such at any meeting of scholars or scientific men? Is there, in any real sense, at the Universities? Doubtless the proportion would be better if you substituted the *Almanach de Gotha* for *Minerva* in your researches; for of those whose names are in the former, a majority would at least, for hereditary or social reasons, profess allegiance to the faith of their fathers. But frankly, even among the

general public, whether you take as your standard the fortunate classes or the disinherited, it is only by very narrowly limiting your area that you can get even an appearance of any general adhesion to the ancient faith. I am not lamenting this condition. It is partly the natural fruit of liberty. With toleration ruling alike in practice and theory it is clear that many whose allegiance has been merely nominal will drop away, and in some cases hereditary influence is now on the other side; while in those who remain there is a growing intensity, which more than makes up for the lack of extension.

Whether, however, we lament the fact or welcome it we must face it. So far as numbers go, the Christian Church is no more than a section of the modern world, one among its many several developments. People dislike calling it a sect or a denomination, but it can be nothing else, so long as there are large numbers who repudiate all part or lot in it and in many cases detest its ideals. Civilisation in its statesmanship, its economic development, and more and more in its social and intellectual

life, goes on its way, not indeed unaffected by so great a tradition, yet largely independent of it. In fine, that secularisation of life which began with the Renaissance and was developed by the Reformation has now gone much farther. Religion has become almost entirely departmental, and it is more feasible than it once was to treat of the life and manners of the age apart from Christianity, and to leave it out of account in estimating the lines of future development. One observer definitely states that religion may not be regarded as so much a private affair, but that we need not reckon on its influence in any general view of modern society. Mr. Masterman, in the *Condition of England*,[10] declares that "despite rallies, the process continues. It continues without violence, continuously, steadily as a kind of impersonal motion of secular change. It is the passing of a whole civilisation away from the faith in which it was founded and out of which it has been fashioned." Lord Haldane declares that "the dominant ideals of the average man of the middle class in Scotland appear to him to be a sort of mild agnosticism,"[11] and from what I am told of

this country and Canada the only difference is that the schism between the Church and civilisation is greater than in the old world.

And not only is the Church no longer the religion of civilisation, but she is met by many competing systems, and that even on her own hypothesis that mankind needs redemption. That is the point. They are so many. We live in an age of unparalleled anarchy both moral and intellectual. The confusion of tongues is worse than in any Babel of old. You have not exhausted the prospect by describing the Christian Church as only one among many competing agencies. Nor can you get rid of her claims by saying that she is the Church only of the uneducated.

For what are the alternatives? In place of this body which has stood the test of experience, what is there offered to us? What system is accepted by those reflecting men of our day who deny the claims of the Church of Christ? Surely by this time we ought to have a clear answer if mere reasoning could avail; for the problem of life has been discussed by many acute minds. There ought to be some body of

philosophic doctrine, the possession of all educated men. Where is such a doctrine to be found? If we are to give up our life in a society, which has enshrined the essence of all that is highest in the religious experience of men, we ought at least to learn what we are giving it up for. Besides, if the exercise of our logical faculties were all-sufficient, since they are common to all men, we ought to know where we are by this time. But we don't. That is the long and the short of it. Outside the Church, men don't know where they are. On the one hand is the Church, still in possession, still taking from her treasure house things new and old, still consoling and converting men; she has history on her side and all the weight of tradition; there breathes in her temples the aroma of all the souls she has nourished and still nourishes, and on the other hand there is — what? Is there any other faith or fancy which holds among educated men anything like the predominant influence of rationalism in the eighteenth century? I grant you that the intellectual atmosphere we breathe is no longer Christian; that if

I take up a volume of verse it is more than likely that it is the work of an infidel; that if I embark on a new philosopher (there are plenty of them) ten to one he despises the Christian faith so deeply that he has never been at the pains even to think what it means; that if I broach a scientific historian his attitude to the founder of Christianity will not improbably be one of a supercilious patronage. I admit that the pictures I see, the books I read, the music I hear, the plays I witness are largely the work of men outside the Church. All this on the negative side I grant. But what is there positive to set in its place? This question remains without reply. Scientific materialism is not held as a creed except by few, is commonly declared not to be one, although its presuppositions rule men's minds to a larger extent than they know. Beyond that all is chaos. Positivists, agnostics, idealists, pessimists, optimists, sceptics, theists, atheists jostle one another and nobody knows what his next-door neighbour thinks. And that even among reflecting and cultivated men, who are above the mere vulgarities of money-making.

Twenty years ago one could not have said this. In those days the reply would have run as follows: "As to the vulgar, whether learned or ignorant, we neither know nor care. The only person entitled to a judgment is the trained philosopher, and from such the answer is not doubtful. All who do not write themselves down as incompetent are agreed upon some form of idealism. Their attitude to religion varies. Some are Christian and employ their philosophic doctrines as a prop to orthodoxy. Others are Christians with a difference and use their faith to purge tradition of its accretions. Others are theists and find in their system the one irrefragable refutation of materialism; others interpret the doctrine in an atheist sense or in one purely sceptical. All, however, are agreed that some form of the philosophy which was developed by Hegel out of Kant is the only possible resting-place of thinking men. They differ from the master in many ways, or sometimes deny that they have one. But they claim that the doctrine they hold explicitly is implied in the faith of all; that it combines the certitude of science with

the comfort of religion; that with the progress of education it will become a postulate of all culture. Whatever of the Christian creed may be harmonised with this system will endure; for these are the fundamental ideas of religion; the rest will vanish." That or something like was the view present to humble enquirers not many years ago.

In the words of one of its authorities,[12] "For many years adherents of this way of thought have deeply interested the British public by their writings. Almost more important than their writings is the fact that they have occupied philosophical chairs in almost every University in the kingdom. Even the professional critics of idealism are for the most part idealists — after a fashion. . . . It follows from their position of academic authority, were it from nothing else, that idealism exercises an influence, not easily measured, upon the youth of the nation — upon those, that is, who from the educational opportunities they enjoy may naturally be expected to become the leaders of the nation's thought and practice." Or as a hostile critic says, "For thirty years

or more English thought has been subject, not for the first time in its modern history, to powerful influences from abroad. The Rhine has flowed into the Thames, known locally as the Isis, and from the Isis the stream of German idealism has been diffused over the academical world of Great Britain."

It can hardly be questioned that this is a correct account of the philosophic orthodoxy of the last generation, and perhaps it may still be called orthodoxy. But is it anything more? Is it dominant among students of philosophy in the same sense as it was? You know that it is not. Speaking in this place, which the memory of William James would alone suffice to render illustrious, if all its other voices were silent, I need not recall to you the philosophic movement of which he was a leader. Whether its trend is right or wrong, it is not relevant here to enquire. Enough for us that it exists, that it has won wide acceptance, and that it is in sharp antagonism with the whole *anschauung* which a little while ago seemed so well established.

M. Bergson, too, has won a fame at least not inferior. Whatever his ultimate place in the history of thought, there is no doubt that he counts and will count more and more as time goes on. As one put it, "in future we may be pro-Bergsonians or anti-Bergsonians, but we shall all be post-Bergsonians."[13] Things cannot be as though he had not written. Yet the whole argument of *L'Evolution Créatrice* and his other works is the direct antithesis of the maxim of Hegel, that the hidden secret of the universe must be penetrable to thought. Like the man or woman in the street, the lover, the soldier, the schoolboy, Bergson would place instinct or intuition on a higher level in regard to our insight into reality than pure intelligence. He even goes so far as to pronounce the intellect incapable of comprehending life since it has been formed in the interests of practical activity and never penetrates beyond the outward aspect of things, and even that it exaggerates.

If you go further and take up any philosophical journal you will find hints of other movements, all directed against orthodox

idealism. We have new realists like Mr. Bertrand Russell and Mr. G. E. Moore, and they are not alone, at least on the critical side. Writers like Mr. Prichard in his criticism of Kant[14] and Mr. Joseph are at variance with what has been the main tendency since Kant.[15] They are opposed to the view that the *esse* of things is *percipi;* while Mr. Galloway, writing from a somewhat different angle, declares that philosophy is moving towards some form of ideal-realism, or, in other words, is moving right away from the direction it took with the 'Copernican Revolution.'[16] All these tendencies are significant, and the list is not exhaustive; Nietzsche is exercising a great influence, and no one, I suppose, would call him a successor of the apostles of modern philosophy. I note all these movements not in order to discuss them, but rather to point out that there is no such thing as philosophic authority at present, nor any likelihood of our reaching it; in other words, no body of principles to which all students adhere, as they do in the special sciences. There is no agreement among those who reflect on these

topics, and so far then as experience goes, we have no ground for trusting that the unillumined reflections of the human reason, revolving on itself, are bringing us to a knowledge of reality. I remember some years ago asking a trained philosopher whether he foresaw the prospect of any main general conclusions on the part of philosophers. He said No. At that time, more or less obsessed with the fashionable cult, I could hardly credit his words, but now I see what he meant.

Thus, then, however you would account for it, it would seem a simple fact of observation, that there is some "kink" in the human logic which prevents man arriving at the true knowledge of things by any exercise of his rational faculties alone, and that, though the power of drawing inferences is universal. So far as we can observe the history of these attempts, through its whole progress there is but one conclusion, and that is confirmed by the existing condition of thought. It may be summed up in the well known lines of Omar Khayyam:

"Up from earth's centre, through the seventh gate
I rose, and on the throne of Saturn sate;
And many a knot unravelled by the road;
But not the master-knot of human fate.

"There was the Door to which I found no key;
There was the veil through which I might not see:
Some little talk awhile of me and thee
There was — and then no more of Thee and Me.

"Earth could not answer; nor the seas that mourn
In flowing purple, of their lord forlorn;
Nor rolling Heaven; with all His signs revealed
And hidden by the sleeve of night and morn."

However, it may be said that there is general agreement to adopt a purely agnostic standpoint. If we include the general level of educated and half-educated people, this would be nearer the truth. As a purely philosophic doctrine agnosticism is, of course, by no means incompatible with theistic or even Christian belief, and may make a very good basis for it. Instances of this are numerous; one of the most valuable is that of George Romanes, the great man of science. His work, *Thoughts on Religion*, illustrates the progress of the *anima naturaliter Christiana* from infidelity to the faith, through making his agnosti-

cism "pure"; that is, purging it of prepossessions on either side. For agnosticism need be no more than an assertion that the intellect of itself is incapable of embracing reality, with the corollary that all our knowledge of God is figurative and provisional. It may imply the belief that the idealist account of things is open to grave objection, and that all efforts of the mind un-illuminated by revelation lead to failure. This is very much the use put to it by Mr. Arthur Balfour, who in his *Defence of Philosophic Doubt* and the more popular *Foundations of Belief* has given us some admirable criticism both of the naturalist and the idealist accounts, of the world. It is obvious that with agnosticism so "pure" as this, there is no ground against — there may be very much reason for accepting the Christian claim that our knowledge of God is mediated through His Son's manifestation in human life and can be reached in no other way. In this sense of the term, not only great moderns, such as "Newman" and "Pascal," but even the greater schoolmen, all alike maintain that the intellectual reason is not of itself ade-

quate, and that all our words and creeds are but metaphor; that our knowledge is, in a word, analogical.

Agnosticism, however, as commonly used today, means more than this. It is a particular kind of gnosticism. Its practical meaning is similar to naturalism; while theoretically it is a counsel of despair, which cannot be maintained by beings born to act. For they will not rest in the belief that reality is unknowable, alike to the reason and every other faculty of the soul, and that the world is all a maya of illusion. That is the one real hope in the West; men cannot in the last resort but believe in some reality; I might add that, even taking our life at its worst, it shews such desire for free personality, even if only for the few, that there is less danger than appears of its being satisfied with the opiates of *Panthcism*. At least we find as a fact that, apart from those immersed in immediate activity, reflecting men hold less and less to a truly agnostic position. It always tends to pass into its opposite and to become a gnosticism, whether theistic or the reverse. Herbert Spencer's own

system has been called semi-theism, and he told us in his autobiography that as he grew older he became less hostile to institutional religion. Sidgwick's agnosticism verged on theistic faith, just as in others it is tantamount to atheism. A better instance is that of Mr. Lowes Dickinson. Contemptuous as he is of all Christian ideals, yet in his books on "Religion" he develops a doctrine which may call itself agnosticism, but is in reality a sort of *theism;* and this is even more the case with the dialogue on the *Meaning of Good.*

Of agnosticism, in the popular sense, the strength has been and is not philosophic thinking, but the prejudice from natural science, the refusal of men like Huxley to discern any ground for a spirit world beyond. Even this attitude is changing. Science tends more and more to recognise its provisional and purely descriptive character; further it is being driven to credit as phenomena facts which make for a view of the world as spiritual and personal, and destroy the hope that, with a little more knowledge, the universe could be summed up in a series of *differential equations;* be-

cause all history has been fixed from the outset, and at any moment the state of the world might be mathematically deduced from that just preceding. This fatalism is the one and only postulate irreconcilable with the Christian faith.

"With earth's first clay thou didst the last man knead,
And then of the last harvest sow'd the seed:
Yea the first morning of Creation wrote
What the last dawn of reckoning shall read."

Were this indeed the case, and it is the assumption of all who disbelieve the miraculous, we need not discuss the Christian faith, or indeed any other, which appeals to spiritual freedom and treats the future as not determined. Such a faith in that case could have no meaning, neither would human life, as we see and live it from day to day. This prejudice, however, is breaking against the rock of fact. Natural science is becoming in the true sense agnostic, and recognises that it can speak but of phenomena and their relations; of what is behind it has no word to say, one way or the other. In so far as observation increases our sense of the cruelty of nature, it may increase the difficulty of believing

in the Fatherhood of God. Probably the supreme difficulty of theistic religion to most minds does lie in this doctrine rather more than in any of the other points. But I do not know that this has been substantially increased since the days when Tennyson made it classical in his indictment of Nature "red in tooth and claw with ravin," and Mill[17] developed the same thesis in prose.

More and more, too, is science tending to lay stress on the unique, the individual; and more and more does that tend to remove the antecedent objection to the Christian revelation. And it cannot be too often repeated that it is the antecedent objection which weighs with most minds and is at the bottom of three quarters of the destructive criticism. Dr. Karl Pearson's criticism of the Law of Causation in the recent edition of his *Grammar of Science* ought to leave no doubt that those who are deterred from admitting the force of the evidence of the uniqueness of the events connected with the life of Jesus, because they seem at variance with some imaginary law, are merely frightened by a bogie. "As far as our own experience goes, nothing in the

universe ever will exactly repeat itself; . . . . . the law of causation is a useful conception, but in no sense a reality lying as a bed rock below phenomena." [18]

But this is not all. The uprising of psychology is teaching us many things. Admitted facts like those of thought transference and the whole doctrine of the subliminal self serve to shew that our personal life reaches deeper than we suppose, and give us hints of a universe whose elements connect themselves in a way that is incompatible with a materialistic hypothesis. Mr. Gerald Balfour has recently shewn this to be the case in regard to the admitted cases of telepathy, quite apart from the more doubtful alleged cases of "cross-correspondence." Dr. Jevons has further developed the point that the facts of mind-cure are not explained by giving them a name, and that they remain unintelligible except on a spiritual theory.

The new developments in regard to a theory of matter, while they certainly do not make religious belief more difficult, serve on the one hand to favour the view that we know very little about the constitution of

the material world, while all recent research tends to shew us the depth of mystery that surrounds the subject and the highly speculative character of most theories in regard to its nature.

From all these sides, the descriptive nature of science, the electronic theory of matter, the admitted emphasis on the unique and individual, the strange occurrences now known to the psychologist, men are slowly moving away from that view which makes the facts of Gospel appear incredible because they seem to conflict with certain so-called laws, which are never more than observed uniformities and might always be subject to exceptions.

As M. Bergson says, we cannot lay down *a priori* the impossibility of any fact. Indeed, in regard to the Gospel facts, it is not scientific men, but "liberal" theologians who take their science at second hand, who tell us that the stories of the Virgin Birth and the Resurrection body are certainly false. Huxley, for instance, professed himself quite ready to believe it, if he had thought the evidence sufficient. It is literary critics and philosophers, rather

than men of science, who say beforehand that the one or the other is plainly impossible.

Thus the prevailing uncertainty in regard to fundamental principles weakens the force of any and all the systems which compete with the Christian Church, while the recent advances in scientific thought have lessened the current objections. For all that, the great obstacle to belief among ordinary minds is the success of physical science; the achievements in the practical world that have issued from a method of enquiry which postulates a uniformity against which the Christian story and our sense of freedom are alike in conflict. We are learning that even in the simplest facts there is ever a mystery at the last, a point at which you can only say, "Things are so," "Blue is blue, and there's an end of it." As men see this and as they see also the mysteries involved in the scientific projection of the world, and concentrate attention on the actual facts of freedom and the realm of values, and as they further see the connection between the postulates of human freedom and those of the

miraculous or the Divine freedom; so will the mirage of natural uniformity vanish, like the dream it is, and they will be able to place themselves before the light, that shone once over Bethlehem, and yield to the great weight of evidence that points to the invasion of this world by powers from one beyond.

Apart from the Christian hope, we are in a state of chaos, only the more appalling that it seems to be hardly realised. The chaos is all the greater that it applies not only to fundamental doctrines, but to practical ideals. For the anarchy of speculative thought is almost a harmony compared with the chaos of the moral ideals.

In the last century the world could still retain Christian ideals, while giving up that life in the Church which alone makes them possible. That belief has been shattered by facts, and writers of the older school of rationalists, like Goldwin Smith, noted and lamented this. Here and there you find a belated Positivist or an austere agnostic holding to an ideal indistinguishable from the Christian, but for the most part the non-Christian no longer even

affects to take Jesus as Master, but opposes, with more or less of contempt for the founder, the whole system of Christian morals. I will not dwell on the great movement of which Friedrich Nietzsche was the mouthpiece, although I believe it to be significant. Its glorification of pride, its philosophy of cruelty and race antagonism are a shining expression of the spirit of antichrist and of the practical ideals of many men who would be shocked at the language of Nietzsche. It is fair to say that part of Nietzsche's individualism had its origin in a wholesome reaction against the pessimistic ethical socialism, derived from Schopenhauer or the East, which preaches altruism not because of the worth of, but because of the (alleged) unreality of the individual. Also from Nietzsche's polemic against arid intellectualism there is much to be learnt, and from his general romantic attitude. At the same time his whole contempt, not merely of the Christian creed, but of Christian ethics, is undoubted and cannot be lost sight of. Moreover it is, in this respect, as incarnating a new philosophy of pride and reviving ideas essentially

Pagan that he has his greatest vogue — and it is in this respect that his disciples would claim to be "immoralists," as opposed to the whole notion of ethics which has prevailed for two thousand years. This is discerned to be the true inwardness of the conflict between the ethics of Christianity and Nietzsche by a writer in a recent number of the *Hibbert Journal*, Professor Otto Julius Bierbaum,[19] in an interesting article on *Dostoieffsky and Nietzsche*, from which I make some extracts. It is indeed the strongest presumption in favour of the Divine and other-worldly character of the Gospel that it should be seen to be diametrically opposed in outlook, in motive, and practical maxims to a scheme of things avowedly Pagan, self-regarding, and this-worldly. "I speak from the standpoint of "one to whom Nietzsche's doctrine of the "transvaluation of all values is something "more than an empty phrase, and I assume "that it indicates the direction in which the "most potent forces of Western culture are "moving today. . . .

"Even if it be conceded that the spirit "informing him is, for Russia, fit and salu-

"tary, it does not follow that it is the same "for us. *We to whom Dostoieffsky remains "at bottom a stranger are not born to absorb it; "to attempt this would be to deny Goethe and "to regard Nietzsche as a disease. It is a "divergent path that we are called to tread. "Our wanderings in the Catacombs are over.*

"Those by whom this doctrine is rejected "(as it may be by men of great intellectual "power) should welcome Dostoieffsky at "once as a kindred spirit; for in him Christ "speaks, and we must go back very far in "the history of the Christian faith to find "one in whom he speaks so forcibly as here. "I for one should need to go back to S. "Francis of Assisi. . . .

"On the one hand we have Nietzsche "breaking in his *Zarathustra* the tables of "the Mosaic Law; on the other Dostoieffsky "raising up out of the depths of his Russian "heart the primitive Christ."

If you take other non-Christian teachers, like Mr. Lowes Dickinson, it is easy to see how entirely they repudiate the Christian ethic. An Oxford tutor, in his *Religion of all Good Men*, while personally doing homage to the teaching of Jesus, declares the whole

system to be obsolete, and would substitute the "Gothic" ideal, as he calls chivalry — the ethical simplification of "gentlemanly conduct."[20] Mr. H. G. Wells, in his impressive study, *First and Last Things*, has told us that the personality of Jesus does not appeal to him; while of the book which has united Christians of every obedience, another teacher from Oxford, Mr. Henry Sturt,[21] writes in the following elegant terms: "Of all the terrible intellectual disasters of Europe the Bible has been by far the greatest, mitigated only partially by the wild romantic savagery of the Old Testament, by the sweet natural beauty of the preaching of Jesus, and, for us, by the old-time nobility of our Jacobean translation. What an irreparable injury to the intellectual growth of England that week by week, for centuries, the people have had presented to them 'lessons' from the records of an Arabian tribe unapproachably distant in culture, in national sentiment, and in spiritual aspirations. Who can estimate the degree to which our poetry has been stunted and starved, our national genius

crushed, our history cheapened and thrust out of sight by this alien oppression? Scholars have sentimentalised over the desolation of Hellas by the coarse, ignorant tyranny of the Turks. Have they ever thought of the ruin these ill-starred Jewish scriptures have wrought to the mind of the Teutonic nations?" It is not as though there was any compensating agreement about the fundamentals of morals. Christian chastity is condemned; Mr. Bernard Shaw would make divorce "as cheap, as easy, and as secret as possible"; a great novelist was for treating marriage as on the system of a leasehold contract, terminable at intervals, while reputable names can be found defending vices which even the Pagans condemned, and a recent historical writer has set up Heliogabalus with all his nameless vices as a mark of modern admiration.[22] Of course many would hold to an austere view of morals quite apart from religion; others would recommend no more than "manly" liberality. But whatever they may approve, they are at variance with the Christian notion of marriage, and our novels and plays and

popular agitations bear witness to a chaos in moral ideals. This hopeless floundering in all men's notions of right and wrong may be partly due to the strange complexities of our day, but it is more often the result of the breaking down of all barriers to the individual caprice and of the preaching of a doctrine of "living one's own life," which leaves a man or woman — for the evil is largely there — with no stars in heaven to steer by. For "God hath made man upright, but he hath found out many inventions." A society which leaves God out of the reckoning in all matters of family and sexual intercourse is bound direct for the rocks. At this moment indeed it is the ethic of Christianity which is more unpopular than the creed. It hinders the free development of the individual in regard to society, or it is disliked as ascetic and unnatural in regard to the private life; and in business relations it is rejected on principle as mere sentimentalism.

This is all very natural. The firmest believer in Christ finds his ideal so far beyond his practice that it is very unlikely that an unbeliever should retain a thing

so difficult; while the balance between egoism and altruism is so hard to strike in theory that the Christian Church is the only society in which a fair mean can be had, and apart from life therein we should anticipate what we actually have, an oscillation between capricious individualism, or an altruism no less irrational.

So far as we Christians are concerned, it is the ethical antagonism which is the more important. Nietzsche with his insight saw that here was the crux. So long as men go on admiring Jesus and making Him their ideal, no good will come from disproving the Gospel history. Somehow or other men will hold to a system fundamentally Christian and will adopt practically, if not theoretically, an attitude of worship. They will act in a way which logically implies the system which in theory they have rejected. If they are finally to be cut loose from the Christian Church, they must be taught to trample on the Christian ideal. And so Nietzsche set himself to develop the taunt of the rejecting Jews at our Lord, "He hath a devil." Since many men, as a fact, live an anti-

Christian life, he only drew out what was implied therein. That is one reason of his influence. He made an idol of the deeds of "bloodthirsty and cruel men."

Perhaps I may seem to exaggerate the chaos of existing beliefs. Rather I believe that I underrate it. So far as concerns that world called educated or specifically modern, the anarchy is greater, not less, than I portray. The fact is disguised from us by the presence amongst us of classes who cling by instinct to the old faith. What I am thinking of is the seething cauldron of this modern world, not those who, whether by fortune or choice, live in a backwater. Barchesters still exist, but we do not live there. In the world where we do live, every kind of current and cross-current is flowing at this moment, or as one man put it, "the pavement is up in all directions"; "for in those days there was no king in Israel and every man did that which was right in his own eyes."

I have been trying to shew that, while as a fact the intellectual atmosphere of our day is unfavourable to the Christian Church,

yet this is merely a fact, the result of one-sided development. It is no more decisive than was the prejudice of the philosophic schools of Rome or Alexandria in the first century. The modern prejudice has been created by the predominance of a single method, triumphant in its own sphere, and the attempt to carry it into regions where it is powerless. This method has unduly influenced certain critics and historians, who have taken their science for granted; unaware of the reserves made by the greater physicists, they have treated as rigid laws what are mere facts of normal happening and have started to reconstruct the New Testament or the history of the Christian Church, with certain classes of events ruled out *a priori* as incredible. The same prejudices have operated to the detriment of history, by creating a bias in favour of arranging it all on a *schematic* basis as the result of inevitable laws, omitting all but a meagre reference to the vast changes wrought by persons; that is, by spiritual beings.

From many sides, however, these views have been attacked. The limits of intel-

lectual reasoning have been analysed by writers like Bergson, certainly not from any bias towards the Christian Faith. There is no longer a united front or anything like it on the part of the non-Christian world. It is as variegated as the religions of Asia. We are in the midst of Armageddon; we may keep the faith, but we must fight for it. Sir Oliver Lodge is but one of many scientific men who bid us remember the limitations of all purely mechanical interpretations[23]; while another scientific observer, Dr. McDougall, has just published a volume, *Mind and Soul*, designed to resuscitate once more the old-fashioned belief in the individual soul which some had told us had vanished forever from the world of "enlightenment."

Neither in fundamental matters of thought, nor in ideals of practice, is there any body of principles accepted in the main by reflecting men or any probability of such arising. On the contrary we live amid a greater intellectual and moral chaos than has ever been known in history. This cannot continue.[24] A civilisation to endure will have to mean something, and "projected

efficiency" will not satisfy any race which considers its latter end. Against the dissolution which is otherwise in store for us, there is nothing to stand but the life of the Christian Church. The existing anarchy renders it not less but more probable that there alone can the needs of human nature be satisfied. Hostility indeed is open and contemptuous, yet there is nothing to inhibit our faith. The Apollyons of modern knowledge are only bogies. Neither from the side of natural science, nor from philosophy, nor from ethics is there any voice so clear or authoritative as to bear any weight beyond an individual appeal; while there is nothing proved, no principle even probable, which stands in the way of Christian Faith. There is no *a priori obstacle* to the faith, provided that it *seem on other grounds to be reasonable.* Such grounds are to be found in the New Testament experience, as solid with the life of the Church and the inward witness of the believer. For there she is, the Christian Church seared with the sins of all the centuries, bearing the memory not only of the saints, a Saint Francis, a Father Damien, a

Fénelon, a Bishop Brent, but also of the Renaissance Popes, the eighteenth century prelates, the persecutors, the time-servers; still she goes on. Here in our midst is the society, which claims to have the gathered experience of the race, still to keep the flame burning, no philosopher's dream or far-off hope, but a life with the scars no less than the strength of reality; still she comes before us and asks, Can you do without me? Is this glad new life for which all seek to be had within me, or must men seek it elsewhere? "Art thou He that should come or do we look for another?" [25]

LECTURE II

BABYLON OR THE MORAL CRISIS

THE Post-Impressionists have lately been the theme of much talk. We are not here to canvass the artistic merit of this strange new school of painting. But the movement means a good deal. By authorities like Mr. Roger Fry and Mr. C. J. Holmes we have learnt something of its aims. We are shewn how it witnesses partly to that Oriental influence which has been pouring in upon Western art ever since Japan was discovered, and partly to that cult of the primitive which has been growing every year. Here is a deliberate effort to step back into the child's view of the natural world and to thrust away the lie of the photographic artist, which, rendering every detail, obscures the whole truth and sacrifices colour and line to what is at bottom mere mechanism. It represents a desire

to get away from our sophisticated world to one simpler. No longer shall the artist be controlled by the desire of accurate presentation of detail; rather by suggestion and subtle arrangement shall he call up those impressions fitting avowedly the scene, and wed his own imagination to that of the spectator. Mr. Roger Fry, in an illuminating article, describes the significance of the movement as follows:

"Again and again have attempts been made by artists to regain this freedom of imaginative appeal, but the attempts have been hitherto tainted by archaism. Now at last artists can use with perfect sincerity means of expression which have been denied them *ever since the Renaissance.* And this is no isolated phenomenon confined to the little world of professional painters; it is one of many expressions of a great change in our attitude to life. We have passed in our generation through what looks like the crest of a long progression in human thought, one in which the scientific or mechanical view of the universe was exploited for all its possibilities. How vast and on the whole how desirable those possi-

bilities are is undeniable, but this effort has tended to blind our eyes to other realities — the realities of our spiritual nature and the justice of our demand for its gratification. Art has suffered in this process, since art, like religion, appeals to the non-mechanical parts of our nature, to what in us is mystic and vital. It seems to me, therefore, impossible to exaggerate the importance of this movement in art, which is destined to make the sculptors' and painters' endeavour once more conterminous with the whole range of human aspiration and desire."

I am not asking how far these men are right or wrong; the point is that they exist. Here in one important sphere, with interests quite other than religious, men are seen in deliberate revolt against the mental habit of the Western world, as it has developed itself since the Renaissance. Elsewhere we can also trace a similar sense of its limitation. It is deliberately controverted by an architectural genius like Mr. R. A. Cram,[1] whom I need not in this place do more than mention. In the Irish literary movement, in the verse and criticism of

Mr. W. B. Yeats, in the plays of Lady Gregory, above all in dramas like Synge's *Riders of the Sea* and *The Play Boy of the Western World*, the same spirit manifests itself, and it finds conscious expression, in regard to language in the latter's preface. There he points out the evil that has been done to the rich suggestiveness and symbolism, in other words the "sacramental" element in language, by the whole modern mechanical method, which uses words like the symbols of a typewriter. We can see the tendency far back in "Tiger, tiger burning bright" and the whole *anschauung* of William Blake, and much that has been written about the "Renascence of Wonder" bears on it. All these movements start from the assumption that the calculable, mechanical aspects of life have been given undue prominence in the West and that poetic, if not ethical, salvation is to be found by leaving it; in a word we are to "repent and become as little children" in the service of beauty, no less than in that of God. For of course those movements have nothing directly to do with the Christian Faith. Their protagonists are

often its bitterest opponents. Yet all are fighting the same battle with the vulgarities and mechanical categories of commercialised Europe; all are on the side of spirit and freedom against Philistinism and mammon worship. All in a sense are other-worldly and despise the tokens of the day; all, if triumphant, will lead to a "transvaluation of all values." People may be spiritually akin, without knowing it or liking to acknowledge the fact when they are told. As was said by one of them:

"For thou art gone away from earth,
And place with those dost claim,
The children of the Second Birth,
Whom the world could not tame;

"And with that small transfigured band
Whom many a different way
Conducted to this common land,
Thou learn'st to think, as they.

"Christian or Pagan, King and slave,
Soldier and Anchorite,
Distinctions we esteem so grave,
Are nothing in their sight.

"They do not ask, who pined unseen,
Who was on action hurled
Whose one bond is, that all have been
Unspotted by the world."[2]

All these things, like the romantic movement in the early nineteenth century, are evidences of a change of spirit which includes a religious aspect, but is in reality wider. Our Lord's bidding to His friends to take no thought of the morrow, to be like children, and to consider the lilies and to copy the birds, is curiously akin to this latest utterance of a *technique* that has swung full circle; only it reaches further. Christianity is not less, but ten thousand times more revolutionary than people think. That jaded middle-aged society of the Pagan Empire did well to see in the Church its foe, and to persecute a living spirit with the gift of Eternal youth. Some tell us now that Jesus proclaimed a social gospel. So He did. But it was not that of Karl Marx or Henry George or any legislator. He came to upset the whole scale of values, and by changing men's desires to inaugurate a new epoch. At this moment there would be few wrongs in the distribution of wealth if people ceased to want more than is good for them. Jesus came to alter men's wants. The real economic reformer is not the man who alters the laws,

but he who changes the wants of a sufficiently large number of people to affect the markets. Consider how great a reformer was Peter the Hermit. He made more difference than many legislators. So does any effective preacher of standards above the common. There would be fewer harlots if the great majority of men even tried to live pure lives; while the appalling inequalities of our day would vanish as by magic if a sufficient number of men were to leave off "making haste to be rich" and a sufficient number of women were to "set their affections on things above." The world improves slowly, because nearly everyone overvalues material goods. That is the main cause of unjust laws, of economic wrong, and nearly all tyranny — not the only cause, but in our day the chief one, except sheer stupidity. Any change of men's ideals in this respect would at once lead to improvement.

As I said in the first lecture, the world of the Middle Ages was anything but an ideal place, and those best off were without our comforts. It was a rough and cruel world of tumbling, quarrelsome,

naughty, joyous, and rather dirty children. Its tears and its laughter, its hopes and its solemnities, still live, not only in our chroniclers or poets, but more universally in those majestic piles, which not even the throned scoundrel who destroyed the Abbeys could quite avail to shatter. These places witness to two things — men's faith alike in God and in man. The two go together. Either the whole world, seen no less than unseen, is conceived as personal, spiritual, alive, ever fresh so that

> "New every morning is the Love
> Our wakening and uprising prove";

or else it is seen as mechanical, impersonal, dead, with human history unrolling itself, like a cinematograph. The one is the world of Catholic Christianity, the other that of Pagan philosophy or scientific fatalism and its more spiritual or at least decorative variety — Pantheism.

It is not doubtful that, if we were asked to name a material symbol of the Middle Ages, we should point to Rouen Cathedral or Durham or to some great monastery church, like Westminster or Selby or Peter-

borough. To many who know nothing else about those days, these form the only conscious link, the one legacy of the past. As John Ruskin said in words which those who have once read them find it hard to forget:

"They are the only witnesses perhaps that remain to us of the faith and fear of nations. All else for which the builders sacrificed has passed away — all their living interests and aims and achievements. We know not for what they laboured, and we see no evidence of their reward. Victory, wealth, authority, happiness — all have departed, though bought by many a bitter sacrifice. But of them and their life and their toil upon the earth, one reward, one evidence is left us in these grey heaps of deep-wrought stone. They have taken with them to the grave their powers, their honours, and their errors; but they have left us their adoration."[3]

There were, of course, many other sides to medieval life. Then, as now, greed and cruelty and lust claimed their victims. But its distinctive note is the effort to treat all human actions from the standpoint of the

other world. That was its standard of value. Its unity is the unity of a band of pilgrims struggling hardly home; its tenderness and intimacy are the smiling tears of a soul that is glad by a great forgiveness; its humour is the wholesome universal play of those who are untroubled by all the storms and undismayed by bereavement, because they know that a man may feel that:

"Love is and was my king and lord
And shall be though as yet I keep
Within his courts on earth and sleep
Encompassed by his faithful guard,

"And hear at times the sentinel,
That moves about from place to place
And whispers through the worlds of space
In the deep night that ALL IS WELL."

Even the ideal of the Holy Roman Empire was the grandest ideal that men have set before them in statecraft, and though it was broken up under the passion and the pride of man, we need not suppose that the vast unity of all human and divine affairs as seen in the vision of Dante is a thing to be despised by a different age.

For it is different. Let us not forget

that. The statecraft, the economics, the education, the literature, the social and family life of our day are organised on a basis frankly secular. So far as these things are concerned, we might almost say that God does not count. Consequently it is the symbols of material possession that are alone striking in the world of today. For that very reason there is less of monumental expression, for men intent on money-making erect buildings only for utilitarian ends. If, however, any one such thing could represent our world of today to Macaulay's New Zealander I suppose it would be the Stock Exchange. That is the true centre of the interests of the vast majority today, excepting small groups apart from the main current. To many others it would be the factory or the mill.

To that end its universities and all its education is more and more being directed. Attacks of daily increasing virulence are made directly on those studies which do not lead directly to money-getting. Not long since some business men went to the Vice-Chancellor of a certain University

and asked him to guarantee that if they sent their sons to take a certain course on commercial topics they would become wealthy men. Physical science is indeed valued, but mainly because it is hoped to increase the chances of money-making. Take the Western world through, and what unity can you find either in religion or thought or practical ideals except the desire for riches? I think I am not exaggerating.

Some one said to me here the other day, "You cannot imagine the degree to which we are materialized; every servant girl cherishes hopes of being one day a society queen." Of course the love of money is not new, but the absorption in it of seventy-five per cent of human energy is, I think, new. More and more people are ill-content with a competence and are snatching at the means of ostentation. What has been euphemistically called the democratisation of society has meant in practice the crushing out of all standards save that of wealth, so that people openly boast that "they judge a man by his balance at the bank"; and many more do so while hardly aware of it. I heard a woman of historic

name, dwelling in a way that might seem beyond the dreams of avarice, declare that she had asked her agent, "Oh when shall I be rich, Mr. Smith?" Every form of luxury has increased, with the result that those who have enough are always, like Oliver Twist, "asking for more," while so many people are living beyond their income that the need of money is breaking down still further the barriers of honour and fair-dealing. It is the mad race for wealth that is the real cause of men's dislike of religion. For Christianity can in no way be got to fit with such a scheme of life, and hence it is left out. Driven by this whip, men are abandoning all scruple, and methods grow daily in favour, which even half a century ago would have seemed less than honest. "The great god success" is described in an American novel as the one goal on which all are agreed, and some one said to me the other day, when I demurred, to his admiration of a set of people, that they were scoundrels, "Ah, yes, but they get there." This aim, whether you call it avarice, or the love of power, or the passion for conquest, has always dominated

many. But it has not always been worshipped without reserve. Since the days of that majestic embodiment of human pride, the Roman Empire, when S. John bewailed "the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes and the pride of life," material standards have never ruled with such general acquiescence, as they do now. The Middle Ages had "their forestallers and regraters," but they did not call them "kings of finance." Even a Renaissance despot, though he embodied a similar ideal, had commonly either political genius or artistic culture. If men did not copy, at least they canonized S. Francis. Nowadays the police would lock him up for sleeping in the open.

However, it is hard to say anything on this topic without becoming either commonplace or exaggerated. Let me leave it with one illustration.

There died last year a sovereign who, though not a great statesman, has left behind him a memory that will not die. Leopold, king of the Belgians, had many of the gifts of the Emperor Nero, without his artistic taste. To the powers of the

efficient man of business he added habits in moral matters which were overacted rather than novel; while his notions of family affection might have been learned at the court of Herod the Great. He developed the resources of his people (including the casino of Ostend). At length he persuaded the states of the West to unite in a scheme which should carry to a backward race the blessings of civilised existence. What those blessings are can be found in many official documents or pictured for the casual reader by Stacpoole's *Pools of Silence*. Recently I received an invitation to invest money in some Congo rubber company on the ground that "the sensational fortune of King Leopold had a meaning." It had. His decease, so lamentable to that race to whom in his own words he was teaching "the sanctity of labour," was discussed at some length by the press of that city, which has ever regarded itself as the metropolis of modern culture. They praised the dead monarch and enlarged on his abilities, apparently regarding as one ground of their admiration his admitted lack of scruple. All this I

quote, not because I wish to add one more curse to one who hears already the cries of a murdered people, but because it illustrates the spirit of modern civilisation with little infusion from earlier influences. The combination of greed, lust, and success, this is what moves the reverence of the Parisian journalists in the year of our Lord 1910; this is the ideal held up to the enterprising citizens — who are not princes. Is it for this and such like examples that we are invited to treat the Bible as pernicious, or gird at the epileptic ecstacies of S. Paul? For remember that King Leopold did not differ, except in fortune, from many unknown makers of millions and many more who would like to make them. It was not that his morals were worse, but that his success was greater, not that his aims were low, but that his place was high, that won for him a renown so fragrant. Every man or woman who invests money with the single aim of dividends, irrespective of means, is guilty potentially of the same crimes. In a debate before the introduction of Chinese labour, one member of Parliament declared that there was

one paramount need, that of getting gold out of the Rand. The moment such a spirit rules, the horrors of the Congo are bound to arise, given the conditions. Indeed, if accounts be trustworthy, the same is true of places like the Valle Nacional of Mexico and of many systems of so-called peonage; just as it was true in the factory system of England before child labour was regulated, in spite of a chorus of shrieks on the part of the rich manufacturers, led by John Bright. None of these things could go on were it not for the morbid lust of men to secure the utmost material gain at the lowest cost and to set aside every consideration of the workers' interests. For the evil does not lie in the forced labour, nor in the tutelage of the child races (both probably necessary), but comes from thrusting out all consideration for the labourer, as a person, and treating him as a living tool, in a worse condition than were slaves in the Roman Empire. There is the root of the matter. You may even have the fullest political freedom and prohibit personal violence to an absurd degree, and yet get results not radically dissimilar, provided

you make wealth your sole object and all thought of means be set aside.

Dr. Bussell declares with truth this point: "Emancipation on two continents sacrificed the real welfare of the slave and his intrinsic worth as a person, to the impatient vanity of an immediate and theatrical triumph."[4]

So it is with our modern freedom and the rights of the individual. No master would venture nowadays to discipline an apprentice of sixteen years, as the rich pay for their sons to be disciplined; for we have carried freedom of the person to the point of insanity, and daily witness irate parents bringing ridiculous charges against elementary schoolmasters for employing in the mildest way discipline that everyone who has been through it at an English public school admits to be wholesome. This is one reason why a certain type of boy in the slums can never be made anything of, unless he be got into the navy. But on the other hand any *employé* may be dismissed to starve in the streets at almost a moment's notice. You remember the story of Mr. Wells' *Kipps;* how a youth is thrown

upon the world, without a moment's hesitation, for an offence which was certainly not serious; and it is alleged that in some of the larger stores the slightest complaint leads to immediate dismissal. These instances serve to illustrate the fact that it is not for the sentimental pampering of the negro or the labourer that I am pleading. And they shew further what freedom means to the economically helpless, the liberty to be exploited in the interests of other people, body and soul, with the risk of being thrown on the scrapheap for the smallest offence and very often for the mere accident of being worked out. Employers' liability has to some degree mitigated this, but it is not universal and was secured amid the frantic protests of the plutocracy. Nor does this condition concern the very poor alone. Everyone knows how the middle classes, including even the upper middle class, are suffering from the same condition, and their precarious tenure of their position is more and more recognised. A sudden illness, a slight error of judgment, a mere accident may destroy the whole position of a small professional

man, his death reduce to beggary his whole family, and take away all their chances of a good education. But you are familiar with many such cases.[5]

Perhaps our civilisation is not worse than others, but it is meaner and more insincere; and in spite of all our knowledge, it is fundamentally stupid in the enormous waste of human capacity which it involves.

Nor can any of us escape the burden. It is of no avail to cry, Am I my brother's keeper? or for those who are placed as we are, away from the stress of it all, to pride ourselves on being considerate to dependents, thinking that is all. We are all part of the system. We cannot get away from it even when we try, and we profit by it when we least intend.

If you will pardon a few words, of necessity autobiographical, I will relate an experience. Holding what was called a rich living (as things go), I resigned it and joined a community of men living in voluntary poverty; not the main, but one motive, was the feeling that at least one would be no more exploiting other classes, and that one would be rid of responsibility

for an order, which such an act flouts. But I have not found it so. Primarily I am not interested in these topics and prefer to be free of them to think of other things. But the very means of such simplified living as is provided by this regime, and every piece of bread I eat and every train I travel by, and to some extent the possibility of such an "order" at all, so far as it depends on anything but alms, all issue out of the system which is so repellent. The gains of the act are purely personal, and one's relation to the economic system as a whole alters but slightly, nor does the class-support grow less for such a surrender, in many ways it grows greater, save that one is always a recipient, no longer a donor. Certainly no man is justified in thinking he is freed from all further responsibility and may dismiss from his mind the economic muddle of the world. He cannot be freed. So long as he lives, it is in him; and writhe as we may, we must bear the Nessus-shirt of modern industrialism and still feel that, as we have all our lives been sheltered through the blood and tears of others and ridden on the crest of the wave, so we do

still; and ours will be the guilt if the chains of injustice are made heavier. This was always the case. But it is more transparently so now than of yore. The developments of credit and transit have united mankind more closely than at any other time. We all share its evils and its benefits. Mr. Bernard Shaw has earned the thanks of all for burning into us this truth. In *Widowers' Houses* and *Mrs. Warren's Profession* he throws a lurid light, not on the evils of our day, but rather on all its "pleasant pictures." He shews us how the walled gardens of grace and virtue which make the life of the few pleasant, and it may be noble, are only possible through a surrounding quagmire. The culture and virtue of the few are won through a meanness and avarice which the dwellers in the garden would fain forget. The whole world of the sheltered classes, with their high aims and cultivated tastes, and even their very spiritual vision, is seen to be enjoying its opportunities, unaware how they are the fruit of a putrescent cruelty.

It is not inequality I am lamenting. Inequality may be right or wrong, but it

has in it nothing revolting. There is more apparent inequality between the incomes of some of us in this room than between our average income and that of the disinherited classes. What is revolting is the conditions which take from a large mass of men the means of a worthy personal life, which breed child-criminals, pay women "the wages of prostitution," and even among those better off produce an appalling insecurity. For thousands of people live always on the edge of a precipice, and many more are breaking down from the overstrain of an age which lives in a fever. For is it not true that at present services are performed by "private individuals under competitive conditions, struggling for life and death on the inclined plane that leads to ruin, fighting always for more, lest they should be obliged to take less, too many of them everywhere competing for one job, and the conditions of success not only or even mainly merit and capacity, still less honesty and rectitude, which may be positive disqualifications, but that peculiar and intrinsically contemptible art we call 'push?'"[6]

All this I notice not in order to suggest a new scheme of social amelioration, but to point the need of deliverance. I could not omit it. The problem is haunting and forbids one to think in quiet of the religious and philosophical problems of life. The doctrine of original sin forces itself in when we would fain be quit of it and discuss high themes at leisure. Each man is forced to ask himself, Why is civilisation to me so gracious a mistress and to others so hard a stepmother? Even if we allow much to the solidarity of the family, and say the individual must share in the life of his fathers, we hardly get a full solution. To me and to you she gives the power to live, not merely to drudge; to form plans and win high delights. At our feet she pours the treasured memories of the ages; she opens the long corridor of history and the palaces of all the courts. To us she permits to rest by pleasant streams and grants the glory of letters and the fellowship of men gone by. Why should we have all this almost without our will and others be born to squalor and foul living? Poverty is not the evil in the strict sense. The

peasants' life, if well cared for, has nothing in it ignoble. It is the daily grinding care, the exposure to foul temptation, the blighting of soul, the inferno of the slum, and of things we cannot bear to picture, that are the fortune of too many thousands to leave one a comfortable mind. Somewhere there must be wrong, some canker of soul among us, in a world which keeps its chances for so few and for large numbers reserves a slavery worse in many ways than that of Pagan Rome.

"You and I, you must remember, belong to the small section of society that has both kinds of freedom; and I think it possible that we really have on the balance more liberty than we could easily secure under other conditions, though to my mind the value of the liberty is almost destroyed by the knowledge of the price which others have to pay for it. For these others, the mass of men, what freedom really have they? Can they effectively choose their career, more than under the most bureaucratic socialism? Can they fix their hours of work? Can they determine their wage? Can they travel? Can they educate them-

selves? Can they select their society? Can they assure their solitude?" [7]

We may try to turn away from this spectacle. We do not like it. It is dull. It is so much pleasanter to dwell upon art and letters, so much nicer to think of our "Christian privileges," or (if you will), our privileges as non-Christians. But there they are. They will not let us be. That haunting face of the beggar in the street, the harlot at the gate, the unemployed, the inheritors of disease. Nothing but fortune prevents our being like that. "There but for the grace of God goes John Bradford," was said once at the sight of a convicted murderer going to his doom; and the words cannot but echo in our ears at any sight of a member of the disinherited class.

Idle it is, and waste of breath, to prate of the triumphs of civilisation, or to quote the figures of the national income, when at its heart there is this festering sore, when the proportion of those who really use the fruits of our knowledge to those ground beneath its car must be smaller than in Pagan Rome, far smaller than in medieval Europe. Something is wrong, and that

wrong has been growing with the growth of our knowledge and its resulting wealth. So much seems bare fact. "There is death in the pot" of modern civilisation, and it is not like to heal itself.

Let us turn to the other side and regard the life of the triumphant classes, "the conquerors" of Mr. Masterman's analysis.

Does that offer a cheerful spectacle? The vulgarity and vices of the rich form a theme for satire in all ages and I shall not attempt to emulate it. We may talk of the ennui and boredom of wealth, and there is truth in this. But dull people are not always dull to themselves. Jane Austen's characters appear to us to have led a somewhat flat existence. Probably, however, to them it was about as amusing as her description of it is to us. Dr. Johnson defined a fishing-rod as "a rod with a worm at one end and a fool at the other." That shews that the doctor was no fisherman, but it proves nothing against angling. Freak dinners and other tasteless caprices of

which we hear are probably the highest amusements of which those who give them are capable — may, indeed, be to them a spiritual ascent.

Other sources of evidence there are, less disputable. Despite the advance of hygienics, is health among the richer classes so much better than it used to be? Doubtless more weakly people are kept alive, and the average length of life is longer. But is there less worrying ill-health than of old? Judging by its interest as a topic of conversation, and the universal fads about diet, the proportion of people driven to think about their health is much larger, and even fads would not flourish if the normal regimen were all that could be desired. Doctors appear to think that neurasthenia and all forms of brain exhaustion are on the increase. Not long ago we heard of an epidemic of suicide in German schools due to over-pressure, and it is said that lunacy is on the increase. In setting against this the reduction of suffering through the use of anæsthetics we must bear in mind that the subjective side of ill-health is the most important and the

most disabling disease is probably a cause of less real distress to the patient than some form of nerve or brain depression which leaves his organs sound. And it is in all these regions, where it is felt most, that the standard seems getting lower under the pressure of modern life and its continual fever; and this is the case through the whole range of society. An observer by no means hostile says that it is true even of children; we must not expect them to be so healthy as those of a past generation. And he gives the ground in excitement of modern life with all its rush. This is the judgment of Mr. Cooper in his *Twentieth Century Child:* [8]

"The normal healthy child of eight or ten will do nothing quietly; and when you put it to do modern lessons among people who live on motor cars, conduct two thirds of their correspondence by telegram, and want to prosecute half the express trains in the kingdom for loitering, in ten years' time you will probably have to send it to bed for a nerve-cure. Put a boy to work full hours at a Board school, and later on half-time at a factory, with plenty

of home work and worry besides, and unwholesome food to complicate matters, and the state of his physique will be below modern army requirements. *It would be hard to say in which class of life the child pays the higher price for his knowledge.* But unless we are prepared to face this physical deterioration and to induce the children to abandon their sixteen years of undivided cricket and football for the pursuit of knowledge, it is difficult to see how any philosopher, statesman, or prophet can save the supremacy of England."

If this is the case with the young, a little enquiry at Homburg or Carlsbad would reveal a worse state of things among their elders; while even in regard to the triumphs of surgery, I have heard a brilliant doctor maintain that anæsthetics had caused more suffering than they had cured. At least there is sufficient evidence that those on the crest of the wave are in this respect in no very enviable state, and are probably worse rather than better off than their fathers were. But this is not all. Nor is it the main point. The test of a civilisation is in its characteristic culture and in the

type of men and women who thrive best in it.

As I said last time, amid the Babel of the world's religions and moralities, it is not possible to state what are the governing ideals of the triumphant classes at the moment, and it is ten to one that if you met two dozen at dinner, you would hear a dozen different faiths asserted, with all that voluble enthusiasm that befits "the light half-believers of our casual creeds." On this point I said enough in my first lecture and we need not go further. But if we judge by their conduct, we may well ask with Archbishop Benson, when he arrived in London, "What do these people believe?" We have, however, some better evidence of the type of characters which thrive in our age and may be regarded as its most prominent fruit. It is rather the women than the men of an epoch who accentuate and express its dominant principles, because they do so for the most part unconsciously. It is not what people actually profess, but what they habitually practice, that gives the true note of an age. In the novels of your distinguished compatriot, Mr. Henry

James, we have an accurate and subtle portraiture of the manners and aims of the fortunate classes; the more valuable because it is drawn without reference at all to a moral. There we find women in plenty, whose speech and thought, more subtly delineating itself than in any other writer, live for us, as does the whole *milieu* of their life. And what strikes one next to the consummate, if a little over-conscious, skill of the artist is the almost complete lack of any approach to noble aims or even interesting characters. They are interesting only through the wonderful art of the novelist. I mean that they are none of them people whom one would care to meet twice, and even their immoralities are only disgusting. What sort of an age can it be which speaks in Kate Croy's *Sense of Honour* or in the chivalrous friendship of Charlotte in The *Golden Bowl?* If you go further and take the crowd of people who figure in the *Awkward Age* or in *What Maisie Knew* or in the *Sacred Fount*, no one can deny that you have the picture of a society exclusive, outwardly refined, and sheltered from all the wider

interests of men. Their life is essentially a private one, and their amusements seem never to reach beyond a flirtation that suggests something more. Without (so far as we can tell) intending or desiring to do so, Mr. Henry James has allowed the emptiness, the meanness, and the drab morals of our day a hardly less perfect monument than was given to the Renaissance women under the great Elizabeth. Compare them with the heroines of George Meredith; compare their whole life with the sinners of Thackeray. Why, Becky Sharp is worth the lot of them! She may have been bad, but she was great; they share her badness, but are little, eternally little; and indeed the whole scene of morals suggests that hero of Kipling's poem who had no deeds that were not second-hand, and only committed adultery because he read of it in a French book. Screaming ever more discordantly in the effort to reach beyond the top-note, the men and women of our latter day have achieved only a prevailing flatness of spirit; all this mirrors itself to perfection in the great writer I have been discussing, and it does so the better

owing to the inwardness of his method, which displays the soul from within and also because the men and women he takes are as a rule of no outstanding quality, but such as may be met with in any drawing-room.

What then are the outward products of our existing system? What good things will it leave to posterity to set by the monuments of the past days? *Si monumentum quaeris circumspice.* Walk down the streets of any typically modern town, or take, if you can, a bird's-eye view of a region, like the Black country. These are the things we have really made. We have no right to claim as ours the great cathedrals, or the colleges of Oxford and Cambridge, any more than the Hôtel de Ville of Brussels or the *Rathhaus* of Rothenburg an der Tauber. It is the factories, the banks, the hotels, and the streets and the structure of our towns which display what the age cares for. I do not say that all is bad, or even that so far as street architecture goes there has not been within the last twenty years a great improvement. Here and there a bank or a great shop, or a station like

the Pennsylvania Railway Station is a decent bit of architecture. But taking the multitude of our buildings alone, our municipal buildings, our museums and modern universities, our capitals, our industrial cities, our watering-places and towns of pleasure, our suburbs, rich and poor, what sort of impression will they leave on a future age? One observer of English life, after enlarging on the growth of private ostentation, compares our age with one or two others in terms hardly extravagant.

"Dr. Dill[9] has shewn in the Roman Peace, during the age of the Antonines and after, the people of the Empire turning with enthusiasm to great communal building, and every city setting itself to such achievements as remain today the wonder of the world. . . . What kind of building will represent for the astonishment of future ages the harvest of the super-wealth of the British Peace? The signs are not propitious. A Byzantine cathedral at Westminster, a Gothic cathedral at Liverpool, a few town-halls and libraries of sober solidity, the white buildings which today

line Whitehall and fill the passing stranger with bewilderment at a race 'that thus could build' will be the chief legacies of this present generation. The thirteenth century gave us the cathedrals; the sixteenth gave us the colleges of Oxford and Cambridge and the noblest of English country houses. This tiny England with populations in the aggregate less than that of London today and wealth incomparably smaller has left us possessions which we can admire but not equal. 'The work which we collective children of God do,' complained Matthew Arnold, 'our grand centre of life, our city for us to dwell in, is London — London with its unutterable external hideousness, with its internal canker of *publice egestas privatim opulanter* unequalled by the world.' It was this contrast which gave point to a question which otherwise the plain man would put by as absurd. 'If England were swallowed up by the sea tomorrow, which of the two, a hundred years hence, would most excite the interest and admiration of mankind, the England of the last twenty years or the England of Elizabeth?'"

And truly the outward aspect of the world in which we live is not such as to arouse extravagant gratification, even though we have tasteful drawing-rooms and pleasant private gardens. If we leave out of it all these legacies of a past age, like our churches, or the immemorial beauty of the English country side, and think of the world so far as it is the work of the nineteenth century, can any man, however much an optimist, be enthusiastic? Do we not feel refreshed when we do the bidding of William Morris [10] and

"Forget six counties overhung with smoke;
Forget the snorting steam and piston-stroke;
Forget the spreading of the hideous town;
Think rather of the pack-horse on the down,
And dream of London small, and white, and clean,
The clear Thames bordered by the gardens green;
Think that below bridge the keen sapping waves
Smite some few keels that bear Levantine staves,
And cloth of Bruges and hogsheads of Guienne,
While nigh the thronged wharf Geoffrey Chaucer's pen
Moves over bills of lading"?

William Cobbett was no dreamy sentimentalist, and he used to talk of London "as a great wen," and I suppose that

while the centre may be improved, that if the whole area be included, the prospect would be more squalid now than when he wrote. To set against medieval Florence or Durham or Tewkesbury, all characteristic and typical, what are our types? The factory-town, acres of mean streets, the slums of our cities — places of which one very unromantic observer said, "The best thing that could happen to them would be to be burnt down." It is not that there were no ugly or dirty or repulsive sights in the past, but that their typical monuments are beautiful, and ours are — what we know. Nor can it be said that they are greatly altered for the better by our jubilee clock-towers, the piers of our watering-places, or the frock-coated effigies of municipal notabilities. In other matters comparison is easier. One reason of the delight in the old masters is that the world which they depicted in costume and colour was so much more beautiful. Compare the colours and lines of a Fra Angelico or Pinturicchio's Griselda with any to be found in a modern street. It is the life out of which these things grew that is so

much worthier than ours, or than, say, the *grand siècle* with its pompous affectations. For no one would deny the exceptional beauties of our civilisation any more than the rare glory of an artistic genius, like that of Whistler who painted it; but its characteristic drabness and prevailing squalor make one long to cry out

"Oh Love! could'st thou and I with Fate conspire
To grasp this sorry scheme of things entire,
Would we not shatter it to bits? And then
Remould it nearer to the heart's desire?"

For this ugliness is self-chosen. It is the lie in the soul. We flatter ourselves by supposing it incidental to an age of mechanical invention and much use of iron. But iron girders may be beautiful and marble palaces vulgar. As Mr. Wells shewed in a *New Utopia*, a society with peace at its heart could make use of all and more than all our mechanical acquirements and yet have its bridges, its railroads, and its factories noble and serene, ministers to the life of the spirit instead of torments. No one, I suppose, would deny the dignity of your Pennsylvania Railway Station, and I could name at least

one famous Italian cathedral which is in many ways repulsive. Nor is it for want of money spent that our world is ugly. One authority declares that there is more spent on art in our schools in a single year than there was in the whole fourteenth century.[11]

The lust of personal wealth and the prevailing fever leave men with no eyes for what is worthy or base in this civilisation. Provided they can make their homes pleasant and decorate them with a certain measure of taste, they will contemplate in comfort cities which have no single public building worthy of the name and populations squalid and ill-clothed. It is not iron or engines, it is the unchecked operation of greed that makes life so hideous; and until the soul of man is weary of his millions, we need hardly look for much improvement.[12]

This is the point. It is a new soul that the world needs, not a scheme of reforms. The only source of such new life is faith of one kind or another. From many observers comes the cry for life, for deliverance, for some uplifting power. The cry,

though little regarded as yet in the seats of the mighty, will ere long be triumphant, unless the world is to go the way of other decadent civilisations and pass through self-indulgence to ruin. The remedies suggested often differ, but the sense of need is wide-spread. Let us state some instances. Rudolf Eucken of Jena, one of the weightiest of living philosophers, preaches strongly this very need of redemption. He is no upholder of evangelical tradition. Indeed he has added one chapter to his work on *Christianity and the New Idealism* to redeem him from the stigma of orthodoxy. Yet it is the fundamental idea of the evangelical faith which animates him. He argues that the Western civilisation is unable either to effect man's salvation or to satisfy his deepest needs. Alike from the intellectual and the practical standpoint Eucken argues the needs of those ideas of redemptive grace and supernatural life which find their expression in the Christian Church. Perhaps I may be permitted to quote.[13]

"What do we see? Whirling complexity, restless hurry and pursuit, a passionate exaltation of self and an overweening

pushing of its claims against those of others; life occupied with alien interests rather than its own; no inward problems or inward motives; little pure enthusiasm or genuine love; the fostering and furthering of self ever the dominant note, despite all boastful profession and even some really honest work; man, with his likes and dislikes, the supreme arbiter of good and evil, true and false, so that the main goal of endeavour is to win social favour and respect appearances. All this, however much it may make profession of following after ideal goals and being guided by ideal sentiments, yet reveals in every part of it an inner insincerity, a repellant unreality, a spiritual tameness and hollowness."

"To every thinking man the great alternative presents itself, the Either — Or. *Either there is something older and higher than this purely humanistic culture or life ceases to have any meaning or value.*" [14]

And once more:

"We may dismiss all hope of giving life meaning and value by a mere further development of this purely humanistic culture. Such a culture, even if its goal

were obtainable, would not satisfy us. It has blossomed out freely during our modern period, and it has been successful in diverting the stream of life into its own channels. But the more independent and exclusive it becomes, the more it repels the intrusion of any influence and friendly supplement from the long centuries of past labour, the more clearly are its limitations seen, the more certainly does it live out its influence and bring about its own downfall.

"We are feeling that, at the present moment, and with growing acuteness, a weariness of the world and a deep dislike to its limitations are becoming more and more general. We feel that life must forfeit all meaning and value if man may not strive towards some lofty goal in dependence on a Power that is higher than man and as he reaches forward realize himself more fully than he could ever do under the conditions of sense and experience. Cut off from the larger life of the universe and shut up in a sphere of his own, he is condemned to an unbearably narrow and paltry existence, and the deeps of his own nature are locked away from him. Thus

today we hear a great deal of the superhuman and the superman, but for all the genuine longing such a movement may embody it cannot but degenerate into mere idle words if this superhuman be sought within the world of sense-experience, within the sphere of our immediate existence. For man is far too closely bound by the fetters of his nature and his destiny to be renewed in life and being by the mere magic of a word. *Thus he must either break with the realistic culture or renounce all hope of inwardly raising humanity and realizing the meaning of life.* Only a shallow and trivial philosophy can deem any third course possible." [15]

In other words, man is once more asking the question, "What must I do to be saved?" And those who, like Nietzsche, preach salvation by the superman are in reality pointing to a world beyond, although they eschew with scorn all notion of a gospel from *jenseits*. Eucken, indeed, has no doubt that our fundamental need is the need of a redemptive religion and that it can be met in no other fashion.

"Discontent with the world as it is, till

at last such a world becomes unendurable, is what drives the soul to religion.

"From religion we hope to gain that which we cannot gain from the world, but at the same time cannot do without.

"Thus the question that presses itself on us is the question where, and how it is, that we are conscious of a defect, a disturbance, a warping of existence, which will not allow us to rest.

"In a word, it is the problem of evil that is the winnowing fan for religions as well as for persons, and it is their solution of this problem which is the real test of their pretensions.

"Here, more than anywhere else, life is concentrated into one question and one answer." [16]

Sir Oliver Lodge again, the distinguished physicist, has declared his dissatisfaction with some elements of traditional religion. Yet he emphasizes the truth of a world of supernatural agencies in contact with man, and more than anyone else has he brought into relief the difference between the view of the world thus opened and the closed system of rationalism.[17]

"This is the kernel of what I have to say — that orthodox modern science shows us a self-contained and self-sufficient universe, not in touch with anything beyond or above itself; the general trend and outline of it known; nothing supernatural or miraculous, no intervention of beings other than ourselves being conceived possible.

"While religion, on the other hand, requires us constantly and consciously to be in touch — even affectionately in touch — with a power, a mind, a being or beings, entirely out of our sphere, entirely beyond our scientific ken. The universe contemplated by religion is by no means self-contained or self-sufficient, it is dependent for its origin and maintenance, as we are for daily bread and future hopes, upon the power and good-will of a being or beings of which science has no knowledge. Science does not indeed always or consistently deny the existence of such transcendent beings nor does it make any effectual attempt to limit their potential powers, but it definitely disbelieves in their exerting any actual influence on the progress of events, or in

their producing or modifying the simplest physical phenomenon.

"For instance, it is now considered unscientific to pray for rain. . . . It ought, however, to be admitted by Natural Philosophers that the unscientific character of prayer for rain depends really not upon its conflict with any known physical law, *since it need involve no greater interference with the order of nature than is implied in a request to a gardener to water the garden*— it does not really depend upon the impossibility of causing rain to fall, when otherwise it might not — but upon the disbelief of science in any power who can and will attend and act.

"The root question of outstanding controversy between science and faith rests upon two distinct conceptions of the universe: the one, that of a self-contained and self-sufficient universe with no outlook into or links with anything beyond, uninfluenced by any life or mind except such as is connected with a visible and tangible material body, and the other conception, that of a universe lying open to all manner of spiritual influences, permeated through and through

with a Divine spirit, guided and watched by living minds, acting through the medium of law indeed, but with intelligence and love behind the law, a universe by no means self-sufficient or self-contained, but with sensitive tendencies groping with another super-sensuous order of existence, where reign laws hitherto unimagined by science, but laws as real and as mighty as those by which the material universe is governed.

"'For nothing is that errs from law.' According to the one conception, faith is childish and prayer absurd; the only individual immortality lies in the memory of descendants; benevolence and cheerful acquiescence in fate are the highest attributes possible; and the future of the human race is determined by the law of gravitation and the circumstances of space.

"According to the other conception, prayer may be mighty to the removal of mountains, and by faith we may feel ourselves citizens of an eternal and glorious cosmogony of mutual help and cooperation — advancing from lowly stages to ever higher states of happy activity world without end — and may catch in anticipation

some glimpse of that 'one far off divine event to which the whole creation moves'.

"The whole controversy hinges, in one sense, on a practical pivot, the efficacy of prayer. Is prayer to hypothetical and super-sensuous beings as senseless and useless as it is unscientific? Or does prayer pierce through the husk and apparent covering of the sensuous universe, and reach something living, loving, and helpful beyond?

"And in another sense the controversy turns upon a question of fact. Do we live in a universe permeated with life and mind, life and mind independent of matter and unlimited in individual duration? Or is this life limited in space to the surface of planetary masses, and in time to the duration of the material envelope essential to its manifestation? The answer is given in one way by orthodox modern science; and in another way by Religion of all times."

Huxley in his famous Romanes Lecture, though I suppose he remained in his chosen agnosticism, yet argued for an ethical system very different from anything sug-

gested by rationalism; if the cosmic process is to be thwarted by another, and if as a fact human life has been ennobled by such thwarting, it would seem that there must be in the nature of man some deeps which are not arrived at by any merely mechanical evolution.

Nietzsche again, deliberately anti-Christian though he be, is equally emphatic in condemnation of the present situation. His system turns on the need for a new race incarnating a new ideal. His doctrine of human nature, as sunk in darkness until the superman comes to redeem it, is curiously akin to Christianity. I think also that in his assertion of the worth of personality he is far less vitally opposed to our faith than he is to that Eastern pessimism, masquerading as altruism, for which he partly mistook it. Though he does not accept the Christian doctrine of the individual, his attitude is nearer to it than the rationalist scheme which he attacked; while he has been called more than once fundamentally mystic. He is like Lucifer, son of the morning, a spirit fallen from heaven; and after all his eloquence, his superman is

only a god from the machine, no redeemer from above, but a new conquering aristocracy, the "splendid blonde beast." Like Hegel's, his philosophy comes to the Kaiser at last.

If we take writers more popular, we witness the same phenomenon. Mr. Bernard Shaw in *Man and Superman* preaches a similar doctrine — that the world is very evil, that it needs redemption, and that somehow is to come out of eugenics. In that large class of books of which Mr. Wells' *New Utopia* is a type, and the novels of Mr. John Galsworthy are an element, we find very much the same features. The dominant ideals of commercialism are held up to scorn and some kind of evangel is proclaimed which is to free us from its accumulated horrors.

The lyrical raptures of the Cobdenite school are almost forgotten, except when some stranded millionaire like Mr. Carnegie declares that all is the best in the best of possible worlds, and that in a very brief space we shall reach perfection if things go on as they are. Our world is fonder of riches, perhaps, than ever it was, but I

think that it is ceasing to believe in its idol. The danger is that it should cease to have any belief at all. Wearied of its hope of finding in material prosperity a satisfaction for its insatiable desires, and robbed through that hope of all spiritual ideals, it may sink into a fatigued scepticism and fall a prey to pessimism. This appears to be discernible of many even now. It is this process which needs to be arrested. No order can endure of which the naturally energetic elements are sceptical. Some faith it must have or else it is doomed. If the faith in worldly goods should go and nothing take its place, ours will be doomed, unless a spirit gives light from beyond and help be found in the saving remnant which have not bowed the knee to Baal.

The crying need of the time is for something to shake men out of their complacency. In the literal sense we need seers —men who can see things as they are and burn into men the facts of life in this twentieth century. This work is actually being done by a host of writers, many of them non-Christian. It will be said doubtless,

by the practical man of wealth, that however they differ, they are all alike in being dreamers. Thank God for that. For a world sunk in material satisfaction, a society throttled with comfort, it is only when the old men see visions and the young men dream dreams that there is much hope of deliverance. For that is the point. Deliverance is what they all cry for. There is something wrong; as a man of science (not a Christian) put it to me, "*this world has got appendicitis.*"

Religion is far from being the only scheme of deliverance — our social schemes are also that. Nor is the Christian the only religion of redemption; that is also the note of Buddhism. But it is something to have it recognised that it is redemption that is needful, and not mere continuance; for progress in the sense of development of existing principles will not suffice to secure well-being. It is a change that is needed, a revolution of the spirit; and if this once be realized, the strength of the claims of the Christian Church is in a fair way to be felt. Of the social reformer we may ask, "Where are you likely to get

the driving force to bring about those tremendous changes unless you have a religious faith, or something very like it? Change the economic system of society without somehow changing the passion and the pride of man and you will but change the ways in which the strong will exploit the weak. Without some change of heart, some fresh orientation of the spirit, how are your great social changes to be effected or effectual?" If, on the other hand, we admit so much and look to some system like Buddhism for deliverance, I think the chances in its favour are very small, and that, even were it purged of all local associations. I do not think that the West will ever accept such a system, which, though it indeed promises redemption, promises it as a deliverance from life, (personality) whereas the Christian redemption is a deliverance from evil, from that canker which impedes the upward spring of life. In our age, with all its unregulated ideals, with its fear of materialism and pathetic unrest, there is one craving in which there is hope — the cry for life, life, more life. This is in various ways the secure and

unassailable support of all those schemes of reform which are rife among us. It may mean the claim that even the humblest shall share in the opportunities of living a full and varied life; it may mean the cry (not in itself illegitimate) for full development of individuality; it may mean a cry for something deeper, some ground on which to rest, some home of the soul wherein the spirit may spread its wings and slake its thirst: so far as it does, (and at bottom there is always something of this element hidden) it can only drive men on to that source of all life. He came not only that our joy might be full, but that men "might have life, and might have it more abundantly." The need is for some scheme of deliverance, some new hope. The choice lies between schemes limited to this world, or schemes which give redemption at the cost of personal existence, and the Christian scheme, which "preaches peace to them that are far off and to them that are nigh," because it worships One who is not only the Light, but is also the Life of men, and not only their Life, but also their Saviour.

It is the faith which accepts and transforms pain, which admits and consecrates freedom, which faces and conquers sin, holding the truths of life not in dialectic consistency, but in practical harmony, which alone, amid the wrecks of systems and the profound disillusion of men, has any hope or prospect of winning them to peace. That faith of the Cross it is that alone can satisfy, and it is, while akin to the other faiths, more unlike them than like, and while in moral exhortation not unlike the nobler philosophies, at bottom something different from any, something more splendid, more difficult, more unfathomable, because its essence and its ground are other-worldly, its God One who is also man, and its supreme act the execution of a criminal. Something of this uniqueness I shall hope to discuss in our next lecture.

LECTURE III

CALVARY OR THE CHALLENGE OF THE CROSS

IAN VAN EYCK in the *Adoration of the Lamb* has given to the world what is often said to be its greatest painting. All of you know either by sight or reproduction that glory of colour and composition. No one, however far removed from that faith which alone made such a picture possible, but is at once awed by its presentment of the Victim slain from before the foundation of the world, and its exaltation of that sacramental chalice in which the Blood is made available for all ages and every condition. For it is not the crowd of worshippers in all their bravery of blue and scarlet on which the eye rests, nor even the far green distances with their castles, which make the wonder of the picture, but the figures in the centre, the altar with its

image of a Lamb and the chalice flowing blood. There summed up in an image at once bold and compelling, is the whole notion of Evangelical Catholic Christianity, stretching right through history, binding together the ages in a unity of adoring love. Saints and monks, emperors, kings, popes and bishops and cardinals, and all the procession of knights and virgins uniting in one supreme act of worship gaze upon the Lamb; so that as one looks, one almost hears the words: "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and strength and honour and glory and blessing. And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing and honour and glory and power be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne and unto the Lamb for ever and ever."

That painting represents, with enduring beauty, acts which are repeated in every church and chapel of Christendom. For whether a man hold high or low views of the Sacrament of the Altar, all who hold to historic Christianity would be at one

in admitting that in the act of communion they had hold of God. I take the Eucharist as a starting-point, since this act, even by the admission of our adversaries, is treated as the centre of the Christian cult, and because it takes to its highest point the idea of worship; and in such a way that it cannot be compared with some purely inward process like meditation, which may be said to have some efficacy, even though there were no outside forces to pray to, no voice nor any that answered. For what does the Eucharist involve? Even the simplest person who receives it with faith implies certain beliefs by his act. His presence asserts this at least: that God, the ultimate reality, however much more than personal, is yet so far personal that He can enter into intimacy with men; that man with his limited freedom has used it wrongly and is through that false independence in a state of misery, from which he can not deliver himself; that such deliverance has, however, taken place by the very act of God, who has made the most marvellous exercise of His omnipotence by "emptying Himself and taking the form of a servant" and dying

as a common criminal; that death, however, was not the end, but the beginning, for it was succeeded by a rising again and a continued life in the bosom of the Father, that is in union with the sacred heart of all reality; and that life communicates itself to us through prayer and the sacramental gift. It is fair to add that among those who hold to Evangelical historic Christianity the pure Zwinglians attach no value to the sacramental gift, but even they would admit it to be the culmination of prayer and the most distinctively Christian service.

What I want here to emphasize is the astonishing audacity of these assumptions. They are irreconcilable not only with materialism, but with every non-miraculous theory of religion. They involve a view alike of this world and the other quite alien from the closed circle contemplated by the materialist philosopher, or even the vague harmony of the Pantheistic monist. They assert the supernatural character of the events which led to the founding of the Church, and the immortality of the individual spirit. They are not to be reconciled with any form of

Pantheism, though they of course admit and to some extent involve a doctrine of Divine Immanence. All Christians believe in Pantheism — "for in Him we live and move and have our being." They are opposed, like the facts of our personal life, to the notion that the course of things is one of purely inevitable sequences; and as against the modern tendency to deify the undoubted fact of the continuity of life and ignore the equally undoubted fact of the uniqueness of single moments and the creative activity of the self, they assert the catastrophic, absolute newness of events and individuals and the value of each man's soul not as a means but as an end — something for itself. They do not, indeed, assert man's entire independence. The whole notion of the fall and redemption means that our freedom, though real, is partial and a goal toward which we strive.

"Man partly is and wholly hopes to be."

But they assert such independence as is involved in the self-direction of our acts and the power to ignore God if we will. Neither pure socialism nor abso-

lute individualism finds warrant in the Gospel.

That appeals, indeed, to each man as such and assures him of his eternal worth. He is worth the life and death of Jesus Christ. But again it does not appeal to man as a mere unrelated unit, but as a member of society. In this it is true not only to the earliest, but also to the very latest social and political reflection, as it is also to the daily life of man in family, in school or college, in club or union, in state or nation; only it offers him his life in that one society, whose *raison d'être* lies in the other world.

That is the point — the other-worldly nature of the Christian claim. To return to our symbol, the Eucharist involves that claim in a form at once social and individual and so startling and direct, as to leave no doubt of the fact. Consequently it is a stumbling block to many, who otherwise accept that view of the Faith I am putting forward. Indeed the sacramental idea has been so closely bound up with the life of the Church that it seems unreasonable to suppose that you can cut

this out while preserving all the other supernatural elements. As a fact, we see more and more that along with this vanish all the others, in course of time. In this, however, the arresting challenge of the Sacraments and the claim that therein God gives Himself to man, there is but an extension of what is involved in every prayer to God through the name of Jesus. For it is on the uniqueness of Jesus that all depends. Church and Sacraments exist only as the expression of that life here, the extensions of the Incarnation as they have been called. It is this, the Cross of Christ, which is so startling, "madness to the Greeks, to the Jews offensive," and always will be. This faith it is which defies those attempts, which were they not pathetic would be ridiculous, to assimilate the Christian "way" to any of these humanist codes of morals or social ethics or mere theism, which bear to it a superficial resemblance. Let us avoid theological language; but I think we can say that so far as creed goes, a man is a Christian or a non-Christian so far as he can enter into the spirit of the hymn "When I survey the wondrous Cross." What a gulf

that makes, not of piety, but of outlook, between the two.

The non-Christian may be the more self-devoted, kinder, stronger, even the more religious of the two; very likely he has fewer skeletons in his cupboards, fewer sins that are shames to cover up than I have. Yet he is different, with a different ideal of humility. He would probably despise me for mine. I believe, as the non-Christian does not, that my life is a dialogue, lived in intimacy with One who lived as man and died to restore the peace broken by my act and deed. I believe, and he does not, that in Jesus I have a new life, and that the centre of that life is not here. Those words "Ye are dead and your life is hid with Christ in God" are words of tremendous import and must at least imply that the Christian as a son of the Resurrection contemplates life from a standpoint beyond, and finds his motive force there. He is one, as it were, who has come back, but only for a little while; the Christian's life is a sharing of the great forty days. Moreover, that life I believe to be nourished by a gift as real, though

spiritual, as the physical bread which supports my animal life, and this gift implies the frequent irruptions of the Divine into this world. Also, and perhaps this point is the most shining, this life, though not to be shunned or despised, is but an episode in a career which knows no end to its adventures

> "With ever a new surprise
> And clouds eternally new."

Now such beliefs create an almost unbridgeable chasm between the Christian and other men. As S. Paul said, "If Christ be not risen, we are of all men most miserable." If Jesus be no Saviour, and the other world no home, then we labour under the most lamentable of all delusions. So far as we are really trying to live this Christian life, we are directing all our actions on the ghastliest of shams. We have staked all for nothing — not even an off-chance. How it is that our faith appears aught but sheer lunacy to those who hold it not, I cannot for the life of me imagine. I suppose it is due to our positive faith being weak and our actual worldliness so strong. There is indeed no reason why Christians and

others should not unite for many things which have to be done. In this world we have to eat and drink and dress, whatever comes after. But that men should treat the distinction as unimportant or indifferent, or still worse, that the Christian should do so, and should suppose he can reduce within narrow limits the difference between himself and, say, a high-minded idealist, is only to be explained by our practical refusal to live as we pray. All this is less true of those who believe in a world of individual immortality. But as a matter of fact, that belief is held so little outside the Christian Church and unguaranteed by the Resurrection, that we need not seriously consider it. Despite the prevalence of certain habits, we are no longer living in the eighteenth century.

Let us consider two tempers of mind both found alike among Christians and non-Christians; the one I will call the world-accepting and the other the world-renouncing temper. We shall see that they differ *toto coelo* according as they are held by a Christian or by an unbeliever; while their resemblance is superficial. Upon

every act and every art of human life, upon its amusements, its purposes and all its interests, the other-worldly reference sets its stamp. If "Light be the only subject of a picture," then the light that shines from Calvary makes a new picture, and though every outward object and every isolated act of two men would be the same, yet the total picture would differ, as much as a landscape of lake and mountain seen in the rose of a July dawn or the grey chill of a November fog. Like S. Bernard, who, passing the Lake of Geneva, did not notice the water or the sky, so deeply was he absorbed, the other-worldly person may regard the glory of seas and skies, the harmonies of home, and all its interests as so many hindrances — things which get in his way, keeping back the day when he shall pierce behind the veil. To such an one life seems but a waiting time till he sees God face to face and is "satisfied." As S. Paul put it, "having a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better." Life here in such a view is a *pis aller*, a duty to be done, and delight comes only by-and-bye. The mystics speak like

this, or many of them. It is clear that what is said represents a real experience, that they feel that the supreme cross of all is life on earth, the sense of separation. This life they fill with toil and sacrifice, and the tortures of the martyrs are not to be compared with the fire of the longing that consumes them, the sense that "here they have no continuing city." As they wander in life's ways, to them it is all one whether the path is smooth or rough; they hardly feel the cutting stones, driven by that irresistible desire within, the nostalgia of the infinite. I am not saying that this temper is a right one or that there is not a higher stage, that set down by Dante in the words

"In la sua volontade è nostra pace"

where the soul is so deeply possessed by God that life or death is indifferent, and there where it is at any moment is the place nearest Him; just as in the perfect Jesuit "La sancta obbedienza fa d'ogni luogo Paradiso."

As a fact, however, the world-renouncing temper exists. It may lead to a morbid

contempt of life or a cloistral detachment from human activity. But that it forms one element in the experience of many Christians would appear evident from the number and popularity of the hymns, dating from all ages, which express it. We may decry these other-worldly aims, yet there must be some instinct, deep seated in human nature, which could unite men of such varying ecclesiastical affinity as the author of "O Quanta Qualia" of the twelfth century, or the "Urbs Beata" of the thirteenth, "Jerusalem my happy home" of the sixteenth, or "I'm but a stranger here" of the nineteenth. Doubtless many people enjoy singing them who are very far from feeling "like poor exiles on Babylon's strand" and would be no fonder of their heavenly than they are of their earthly home, except for singing purposes; but there must be many to whom they appeal or they would not continue to be sung.

Now let us consider the opposite standpoint, the world-embracing temper, as seen by a Christian. Just because of its other-worldly reference, this life is seen as having not less but more value. Our life now

and here is to us the revelation of the Eternal. Here in a world of wonder and ceaseless change we are set, and we are to make the most of it all, like boys of school-days. Just as the onward reference of youth, so far from hindering rather enhances the zest and meaning of life during training (unless by a calculating meanness we ruin the present), so with the Christian hope, for it shews us every act as having an enduring as well as a transient worth. The hues of the hills and the seas, every scene or tone of beauty, is no butterfly delight, but is a sacrament of the Love behind. Art and all embodiments of imagery are not less but more valuable because they are not in themselves perfect, but hints and glimpses of the "altogether lovely." This is the true difference between romantic and classical art, illustrated by that between Gothic and Renaissance buildings, of which the former has been called "apparent pictures of unapparent realities" and the latter "simple representation." The former is never quite so perfect and rounded, because it is shot through with hues of the eternal. It is never absolutely

itself, because its meaning is to be a symbol. It is great more by what it suggests than by what it states, and its profoundest beauty leaves the spirit still athirst. It embodies, whether in buildings or in verse or in painting, the mystery of all creation; and however irreligious the artist, the work reminds us that the true home of the spirit is "the land that is very far off," and yet for that very reason can sound in echoes on earth, in the dying fall of a melody, in the haunting inscrutable beauty of a lyric, or in some dream in stone, which makes the spirit at once satisfied and overflowing, so that the heart all but bursts from a joy that is yet only the other side of pain. "I saw thee and I sought for thee; I saw thee and I wanted thee," says the mystic; and that might be taken as the motto of all the noblest art in every age, greatest always in imperfection, conquering by failure; and like the symbol of it all, the Cross shining splendid out of the very stuff of misery. But this world-embracing temper does not stop here. It goes through all things. The Christian may find in every wholesome human relation not only more

delight but deeper meaning than anyone else. Earthly fatherhood is a nobler thing, because it is a shadow of the Divine, and human love glows more brightly when seen as a symbol of the joy that burns at the heart of things. It is not to the mere butterfly, but to the immortal spirit that the treasure house, even of this world, is open. He is a child in the stage of life, playing about and learning till he reach maturity. To him belongs the universe, past and present and to come, in a way that it cannot do to "the poor pensioner on the bounty of an hour." If we are not immortal, we may be possessed by the world, we cannot possess it; we are strangers, it is our enemy; we take a little and then are gone. If we are to go on, we can appropriate it, make it our own, so that its beauty and its sorrow, all its mystery and its splendid acts, become part of us and shine for ever in a spirit that lives with God. Even worldliness demands other-worldliness to justify it. Only the immortals have a right to feel at home in this world. We are like a boy at school or college who shares all his life, past, present,

and to come, and carries it on in the whole course of his career; we are to carry out the treasures of the spirit, for they are part of us; and so of us, and us alone, is it true, as S. Paul said, "All things are yours, whether Paul or Apollos, or life or death, or things present or things to come — all are yours and ye are Christ's and Christ is God's."

We have thus considered the contrasted tempers, the Puritan and the Sacramental, as exhibited among Christians; let us compare them with the similar condition, as seen in others. Compare the world-renouncing attitude of some Christians with that of the Buddhists, or the Western pessimist who preaches a doctrine substantially the same and treats individuality as evil. Such a Christian as the "exile on Babylon's strand" is, it is true, the stranger who laments "that earth is a desert drear" and looks to "heaven as his home." But he does all this not because he wants less, but because he wants more life, including his own. It is the imperfection of the world taken even at its best

that drives him to seek a "better country." He is like a child, who cannot play the games which commonly delight him, because he is consumed with excitement over the feast to which he is going. The good has almost ceased to be a good because he knows there is something better in a short time; just as a thirsty man may refuse lemonade, if he has been told that champagne is on the way.

The pessimist on the other hand declares life to be an evil *quand même* and there can be no deliverance till it be extinguished. Hartmann and his followers can treat consciousness as an evil and look to the day when the universe, weary of its initial error, will swallow its tail — and all be done. The Christian says that life is a good thing, but has been marred by sin; and suffers also from the growing pains of youth. The one is like the new boy dreaming of the day when he will bowl for the eleven, and sustaining himself by the dream when things are very unlike it. The other is the type which at the first onset of difficulty writes home and begs to be removed. Both these look forward to death; the one

because he thinks it "closes all," the other because he knows it does not. The fault of the one is impatience, petulance, the refusal of the sensitive artist to produce because he can never achieve his ideal; he is the man who loses all interest in his work as soon as he has planned his holiday. The other believes that things in themselves are hopeless and the one goal annihilation. If either went to the practical extreme, the Christian would commit suicide from an unbalanced hope, from a desire to see the other side at once; the non-Christian would do so from an unrelieved despair, in order to be rid of an existence found intolerable. Christian pessimism is a pessimism *secundum quid* and treats this world as a purgatory. True pessimism is pessimism *simpliciter* and treats personal existence as hell.

The same is true of the practical maxims that attach to the two types, the Christian and the non-Christian. No greater error has been made than that which confounds the Christian and the non-Christian doctrine of self-sacrifice. Modern altruism teaches what is really a denial of individu-

ality and tries to destroy "the will to live" by substituting "the will to love." The Gospel declares that a man must die to live, but it neither states nor implies the destruction of the self. All false asceticism finds its root in the non-Christian view of self-sacrifice; all true asceticism in the Christian. For it is the ground truth of all education; it is the earliest lesson of the schoolboy that pain must not only be faced, but transmuted through courage into joy and strength. It is the result of the truth that self can only find itself in love, and this involves surrender, giving, cost. This, however, does not mean that personality is annihilated, or that the individual is to be lost in a higher unity. On the contrary love, even in its most sacrificial forms, exalts and develops individuality and strengthens the will. One argument for immortality is the difficulty of believing that certain characters aflame with love can be as though they never were. But it is not hard to hold such a creed about a very selfish man.

I think that some of the animus displayed by Nietzsche against Christian ethics was

due to an error of this sort. He mistook Schopenhauer's doctrine of self-annihilation for Christian sacrifice; in a word he confused pessimistic with educational asceticism, and most of his attack is vitiated by this confusion. On the other hand it must be allowed that Christians of all schools have used and do use language about self-sacrifice which leads to misconception. Some apparently believe in a notion of sacrifice which teaches not the development of personality through self-giving, but its annihilation; and this really treats individuality as an evil. That at least is the logical import of their words, and it has led to disastrous consequences, harmful not only to health, but to morals. I think it is the fundamental error of the Jesuit system, for it is obvious that if complete sacrifice is demanded, the conscience must go too.[1]

Let us take now the counter tendency, the world-accepting, for that also exists on a non-Christian no less than on a Christian foundation. Yet how different! By the Christian the life is accepted as God's

will for him, a state of probation. This world is in all its details a sacrament, the outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace. The beauty of nature and art, the acts of human work and play, friendship and heroism and forgiveness, all are noble, because they point beyond and are caught up in the life of a spirit that passes from earthly society to heavenly. As I said just now, they are worthy, but relatively and provisionally worthy, rather because of what they hint than of what they say. They are suggestions of eternity in statements of time. To the non-Christian, however, they are all in all. He, to whom no further life is promised, may resolve to make the most of what there is, just because he has nothing more. He may accept the world as a place wherein to be as happy as he may and echo the *Carpe diem* philosophy of Horace and many another.

"Ah, make the most of what we yet may spend,
Before ye too into the dust descend;
Dust unto dust, and under dust to lie
Sans wine, sans song, sans singer, and—sans end!"

The pessimism which underlies the voluptuaries' philosophy patent in Omar is yet more shining in the well known epilogue of Walter Pater to *the Renaissance.* "Every moment some form grows perfect in hand or face; some tone on the hills or the sea is choicer than the rest; some mood of passion or insight or intellectual excitement is irresistibly real and attractive for us, — for that moment only. Not the fruit of experience, but experience itself, is the end. A counted number of pulses only is given to us of a variegated dramatic life. How may we see in them all that is to be seen in them by the finest senses? How shall we pass most quickly from point to point, and be present always at the focus where the greatest number of vital forces unite in their purest energy? . . .

"While all melts under our feet, we may well catch at any exquisite passion, or any contribution to knowledge that seems by a lifted horizon to set the spirit free for a moment, or any stirring of the senses, strange dyes, strange colours, and curious odours, or work of the artist's hands, or the face of one's friend. Not to discrimin-

ate every moment some passionate attitude in those about us and in the brilliancy of their gifts some tragic dividing of forces on their ways is, on this short day of frost and sun to sleep before evening. . . .

"We are all *condamnés* as Victor Hugo says, we are all under sentence of death, but with a sort of indefinite reprieve — *les hommes sont tout condamnés à mort mais avec des sursis indéfinis* — we have an interval and then our place knows us no more. Some spend this interval in listlessness, some in high passions, the wisest, at least among the children of this world, in art and song. For our one chance lies in expanding that interval, in getting as many pulsations as possible into the given time."

True, the world-accepting temper is not tied to this Epicurean form. It may take on the austere tone of the Stoics or their modern imitators, the attitude familiar to most of us in Matthew Arnold's poems. Or again its votary may adopt the Positivist humanitarian attitude, a position curiously like one side of Christian ethics in the enthusiasm for humanity and sense of

social ties, and also in some practical views, such as those on marriage. At bottom, however, it is quite different, and though ennobled by high and earnest endeavour, is without that vein of hope and gaiety which clings to the Christian. With the burdens of the human race it has sympathy and enters into its toils and its sorrows, but this burden is to it a burden and nothing more. It has no Heavenly Father to trust to, and when disinterested must spend itself in a fever of activity in order to effect its purposes. It can never rest, for it has only itself to trust to.

The truth is this. The doctrine of a world beyond, in which we ourselves shall have part, may be looked at in various ways and colours itself, according to our temperament; yet in any case it changes all our values. Only the most superficial resemblance is left between those who are Christians and those who are not. Now at last are men coming to see this. They realize that whether the supernatural theory of the origin and nature of Church life be true or false, it is terrific, and that in this

respect there can be little doubt as to the belief of the earliest of Christians or the consciousness of their Master. We may indeed have to allow a good deal more for the way in which the doctrine was developed out of its seed, but of the supernatural, other-worldly claims of Jesus of Nazareth there can be no question. Indeed there never need have been, but for a small circle of pedants, who were anxious to retain the name and prestige of Christian, while rejecting every element that gave the Faith its power. All they held was a mere morality, but they wanted to dignify it with the name of religion. They desired the historic and traditional charm of the Christian Church, while repudiating every element which made that charm possible. Now, however, this school is breaking up under the pressure of mutual criticism, and the issue is daily clearer between those who accept Jesus Christ with His supernatural claim and those who, since they are unable to credit the claim, repudiate His leadership. The half-way house of German liberalism is built on sands; the storm of the apocalyptic problem is shaking it in pieces.

To many, of course, this recognition makes belief harder; for they cannot delude themselves any longer into imagining they are Christians, when they are nothing of the sort.

Dr. Schweitzer, in a memorable phrase, has declared that if Jesus Christ came into our modern world, He would come as a stranger; that our characteristic categories hold no place for Him; that the fundamentally other-worldly claim, the apocalyptic vision of Jesus is opposed to the presuppositions of the ordinary educated man, formed as they are under the influence of naturalism. I believe that Dr. Schweitzer is right; that if Jesus came once more as an individual He would come not to bring peace but a sword, and that many who for sentimental reasons cling to His name would turn and cry "Crucify Him." I believe also that He is doing this here and now, through His body the Church, except where she is false to her mission; and that there is an irreconcilable conflict, not indeed between science and religion, but between scientific fatalism and the postulates of the Christian Faith. This conflict it is idle

to ignore. It meets us at every stage and in every form. Idler yet is the attempt by the promoters of "reduced Christianity" to transform the "great mystery of godliness" into a decorated natural philosophy or a sentimental altruism. For the essence of the Faith is to be spiritual, personal, supernatural, and it may not be reconciled with any rationalistically designed scheme of the universe. Yet it is congruous with life as it is lived daily in this world; with the dreams and "obstinate questions" of the child; with the "long long thoughts" of the youth; with the passion and adventure of the man, and with all the incurably social instincts of the race.

So far as I have understood him, Dr. Schweitzer himself is convinced of the adequacy of our modern categories and thinks them a fit criterion whereby to judge the Saviour of the world. Having shewn that the Jesus of the Gospels is not the Christ of modern Protestantism, and descanted on His supernatural apocalyptic claim, he turns away, treating Him as mere man with a turn for vision. That, at any rate, is one alternative (whether or

no it is that adopted by Dr. Schweitzer). You may believe that the apocalyptic Jesus is nearer to the truth of history than any other, and on that very ground you may be unable to credit His claims, and are therefore driven to decline all connection with historical Christianity. George Tyrrell has shewn how the apocalyptic theory leads straight on to a transcendent view of Jesus, and the situation has been well summed up by a Cambridge scholar.

"Once more we are driven to ask, Who is this mysterious Person of the irreconcilable contrasts, who had not where to lay His Head, and who claimed all power in Heaven and earth? Who, we are told, belonged so completely to His own age that he is a stranger and enigma to our time, and yet men think of Him, talk of Him, worship Him, and find their truest life in following Him? Who lived on earth, they tell us, the life of a deluded visionary, finding out His mistakes on a felon's cross, and yet, the same writer tells us, 'a mighty spiritual force streams forth from Him and flows through our time also'? Who, as the same author goes on to declare,

'in the light of historical inquiry passes our time and returns to His own'? And yet the champion of this new attempt to explain the mystery of His personality has given up his life of teaching and study at Strasburg to be trained as a medical missionary for work on the Congo, and has now been accepted by the French Missionary Society for that purpose, and is, I believe, soon to go out, to fight, as he puts it, 'for the lordship and rule of Jesus over this world.' Whatever judgment we may pass on Dr. Schweitzer's book and theories, let us make up our minds in the light of these facts. Once more he has forced upon us, by what he has written and by what he wants to do, the question of the Jerusalem crowd, Who is this? We may learn part of the answer to the question from the closing words of his book. 'Jesus comes to us as One unknown, without a name, as of old by the lakeside He came to those who knew Him not; He speaks to us the same words, "Follow Me," and sets us the tasks which He has to fulfil for our time. He commands. And to those who obey Him, whether they be wise or

simple, He will reveal Himself in the toils, the conflicts, the sufferings which they shall pass through in His fellowship, and as an ineffable mystery they shall learn in their own experience who He is.'"

A movement somewhat similar is represented by men such as Professor Drews, and in a less degree Professor Jensen, abroad, and less important folk in England, like Mr. J. M. Robertson and Mr. Roberts, and in this country by Professor W. B. Smith. These men [2] have all convinced themselves *a priori* of the impossibility of any supernatural events. At the same time they reject the "Liberal" view that the miraculous and transcendental elements in the story are of a later creation, and that the figure of Jesus as a pure and disinterested social reformer can be disengaged from this supernatural trapping and made a mark, if not for faith, at least for admiration. Such men see plainly that this is impossible; the Gospel narratives, the Epistles of S. Paul, which reflect the earliest personal experience, the whole atmosphere of the early Church as displayed

in the New Testament and in our earliest independent knowledge, are saturated with the miraculous. The supernatural is so much an integral part of the picture that it is vain to cut out all these elements as unhistorical and treat what is left, after this gigantic subtraction, as the fact. The whole of the narratives must go by the board if we may not believe in the irruption of the Divine into this world at a definite time. Consequently the whole evidence does go by the board. They are devoting their energies with much ingenuity to shew that the whole story of Jesus, however attenuated, has no warrant in fact; that the person is simply the eponymous hero of a cult which has gathered round the Eucharistic meal. A mild expression of this tendency can be seen in the words of the Rev. Dr. Cheyne.

"That the God-man, whose cult in certain Jewish circles was probably pre-Christian was called by a name which underlies Joshua, has become to me, on grounds of my own, very possible, and it is to me much more than merely possible that Jesus of Nazareth was not betrayed or surren-

dered to the Jewish authorities, whether by Judas ~~or~~ by anyone else. The 'Twelve Apostles' too are to me (and I should think to many critics) as unhistorical as the seventy disciples." [3]

Such speculations may seem sufficiently absurd. But these words of ex-Canon Cheyne shew that they are not to be ignored by the most eminent critics, and that the advanced school of learned criticism has much affinity with such views. It is very natural. Once grant the postulates on which they rest — and most of the German "Liberals" do grant these postulates — and the conclusions of Drews are far less absurd than the attempt of the normal Teutonic savant to reduce the life of Jesus and the experience of the Church to the level of the ordinary events of their own machine-governed lives. All these people seem destitute of one sense; they are like the senior wrangler who asked what 'Paradise Lost' was written to prove.

The problem offered by the apocalyptic school, led by Dr. Schweitzer, and by the mythological school as led by men like Professor Drews, has not been faced by

the advocates of the commonplace and Philistine projection of the Gospel figure fashionable in circles of *soi-disant* enlightenment and set forth in unadorned sterility by the Dean of Divinity at Magdalen College, Oxford. The point is not whether such views are true — they are obviously nonsense — but whether they are not the logical outcome of these same prepossessions, which cause the excision of all the wonderful features from the figure of Christ and the history of the Church. "Reduced Christianity," as it is called, is but a half-way house. You cannot rest in it, but must move either backward or forward. Either you must surrender anything beyond the merest humanitarian notion of our Lord; in which case you will not improbably be driven further and eventually, like the protagonist in the "Jesus as Christ" controversy, give up all belief even in His historicity; or at any rate you will find it more and more impossible to maintain any real belief in His *uniqueness.*

Dr. Harnack, for instance, is for cutting away most of the transcendent elements,

while still maintaining His unique relation to the Father — a doctrine which really surrenders the notion of history as a mere continuing and makes miracles possible. It admits a "creative evolution." It is doubtful whether this view can be sustained. The whole movement of the Christian Church may be a delusion, and then we are all in the dark, except that the darkness has been made visible by the pathetic splendour of Christianity. For, as men are coming to see, the Liberal Protestant view of our Lord really is a justification of the Jewish people, who crucified Him for His claims; and it is to that Judaistic theism that those must return who are so deeply wedded to the modern superstitions of law and continuity that the exceptional, the unique, the really new event or person is to them inconceivable. If on the other hand you accept the lordship of Jesus as a mysterious being, with something in Him more than human, you will be carried, however reluctantly, to the Christ of the Creeds and the New Testament and the whole supernatural faith in a Church dispensing gifts of God's grace

and guided by a power not of this world. This also you will do, unless you are so deeply convinced of what can NOT happen that you remain unmoved by the accumulated weight of evidence, historic, social, personal, which points to a transcendental interpretation of these strange facts in the world's experience.

What I want to emphasize is, that here is the dividing line, and we must make our choice. Christianity may be true or false, but it makes claims subversive of all the rationalist projections of life. It rests on presuppositions which cannot by any ingenuity be reconciled with any view which denies the miraculous, the unique, the individual. Its whole meaning comes from a faith in a life of spirits behind the veil. It cannot without hopeless error be confused with those systems which deny such a life or treat it as impersonal. You cannot treat existence as a closed circle, with every part predetermined, and at the same time assert the reality of freedom and the guilt of sin. You cannot place the same value, as others do, upon human life on earth, if you hold that life to be but an

episode in a career which passes far beyond earth. This world is a different place according as it be viewed from the Christian or the non-Christian standpoint, and no ethical or personal sympathy can bridge the gulf.

A very cursory perusal of the New Testament ought soon to convince even the most pronounced Liberal that, even allowing for differences of date and expression, the experience therein recorded is something other than that contemplated by their system. It is above all things of a "new life," a vast change, that the writers speak, and it always has reference to the world beyond. Take the most characteristic phrases of S. Paul, such as that of being "buried with Christ in baptism"; that "Christians are dead and their life hid with Christ in God"; that he is "crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, yet not I but Christ liveth in me." These might conceivably be paralleled in non-Christian mystical writings, but that of itself points to the other world and is far removed from the drab Philistinism of the Liberal. Its very meaning is the unity between the

individual and the all; the flight of "the alone to the alone."

Or take the phrases about the peace purchased with the blood of Christ. They are quite as startling, or even vulgar some might say, as hymns like Cowper's "There is a fountain filled with blood." The cry of an untaught Methodist, the "blood and fire" of the Salvation Army, the best English form of devotion to the Sacred Heart, are one and all nearer to the mind of the New Testament writers, to S. Paul, and S. Peter, and S. John, and above all to the Epistles to the Hebrews, than are the ethical commonplaces of Unitarian or semi-Unitarian Christianity. I suppose this element of strangeness and unorthodoxy would be admitted in the writings attributed to S. John, but discounted. As a matter of fact it is of little importance for our purpose here who wrote them. They certainly represent a state of mind that existed in the Church quite early. Of that transcendental, other-worldly conception of Jesus as existing in the Church they are first-hand evidence, no less than the Epistles to the Ephesians or the Colossians. Turn

the New Testament inside out, dissect it as you may, and you cannot read it for ten minutes without coming across flashes of this sort side by side often with the most matter-of-fact maxims for the conduct of parents and children, wives and slaves and citizens. One unique feature of the New Testament is the interpenetration of the plainest moral precepts with the most exalted mystical ecstasy.

Finally is there not in the central figure itself, despite all this simplicity, something strange and elusive? There is, it might almost be said, a certain absent-mindedness in the utterances of JESUS; and while He lives the life of a Jew, the words which at one time caused many so much pondering would seem expressive of His habitual way. It is not a character easy to be described, and His life in the wider sense could not be written. Impressionist portraiture was all that was possible, and that is what we have. It is incomplete, unchronological, unscientific, if you will; but the impression is always the same, the weird mingling of the homely and the far-off, the strange romantic tender-

ness for things human and little, the passion of faith; and the unbroken calm all intertwined with that power to do things, to make wonders, leaves us, as it left his earliest friends, in suspense. "What manner of man is this?" Stranger, as Dr. Schweitzer calls him, to our age, He was strange to His own, so strange that men were driven either to crucify Him or else to take up the Cross themselves.

I trust that these instances do not weary you. For further confirmation I would refer to the New Testament. I am convinced that it is only because people insist on discussing religion, who are ignorant of the Bible, that it is ever thought feasible to present Christianity as a merely human religion, while still maintaining it to be Christianity. People will read philosophy, theology, criticism, anything rather than the Bible, and then they wonder why the system of the Church is so unintelligible. I confess it myself. It is only these last few years that I have, as it were, rediscovered the New Testament; and the more I study it, not critically but devotionally, the more does the choice it leaves seem clear to me. Either this thing is a delusion the most

gigantic the world has known, or else it is a revelation from beyond, a gift of grace, something that we could not have done for ourselves. Either it is what it claims, the power of God able to save to the uttermost and giving peace and freedom, or it is a quack medicine; this conclusion is vouched for alike by its earliest records, by the history of the Church, and by the experience of the individual Christian today, from Papist to Plymouth brother. All believe themselves to have hold of a new supernatural life, to be sustained by forces not their own, to be in touch with One, of Whom however little we know, we know enough to enter into communion with Him; and that He can give us of Himself. This He has done by the medium of His Son, the very brightness of His glory, and that Son not only shews us the Father, but in some way beyond our ken has bought for us deliverance from death by His great act on the Cross; so that whosoever believeth in Him shall not perish, but have Eternal Life. In other words, Christianity is supernatural, or it is a sham.

But what do you mean by the supernatural? And what right have you to use the term? These are questions certain to be put. It has recently become the fashion to deprecate the use of the term supernatural; to declare that the spiritual significance of nature is so real, and the consecration of our ordinary life so needful, that to use this term arouses needless hostility and leads to a low view of human duty. Carlyle used to declare, "The natural is the supernatural." Do not all Christians hold to the Omnipresence of God? That means His Immanence in all His works, and so far from honouring God, we are profaning Him by shutting Him off into one separate part called supernatural. I think that this objection is groundless, and that the disuse of the term leads to grave dangers in the direction of Pantheism, dangers which we have not altogether escaped. It is partly, of course, a matter of definition. If, as Huxley said somewhere, nature is taken for simply the universe of being, it is quite clear that the natural is the supernatural; it is indeed a truism. Nobody asserts that miracles are

against the nature of things; if by nature we mean all that happens, as Mill put it, of course they are natural events. Only as a fact people do not mean that when they speak of nature. They mean this physical visible world. *The question is not whether this world has a spiritual significance, but whether it is all or only a part of the whole.* The least misleading way of asserting that there is, in addition to this world, a larger invisible world behind it, with other powers than we possess, is, to my judgment, to make use of this derided term supernatural. But of course it must be remembered that, taking the universe as a whole, events such as the birth of Christ are natural, miracles are normal, all is according to order; but it is the nature, the law, and the order of the whole, and of that whole we have here but a tiny part.

On this point and on some others touched on in this book, the reader will do well to consult an admirable article by Miss Carta Sturge in *The Commonwealth* for September, 1909. It is in the form of a review of Mr. Dearmer's book on *Body and Soul*, but it deals with topics of wider interest. I wish

that it could be reprinted. Failing that, I quote the following.

"Nevertheless, perhaps, in his recognition of the essential Unity of Matter and Mind, it is possible that the author somewhat loses sight of the difference of planes in which the Creator manifests Himself when he comes to the question of miracles. He speaks, and in a sense rightly, of the 'naturalness of miracles.' If 'naturalness' is held to be equivalent to processes carried on in obedience to law, laws whether spiritual, psychic, or physical, then the expression is true. But as a matter of fact we generally understand by natural the workings of the laws of the physical plane, which we call the world of Nature, and which works according to laws of its own, laws which we are learning to know with great exactitude and on which we can calculate with increasing certainty so long as (there is the point) they are not interfered with or counteracted by the higher laws of another plane. But surely it is the bringing into play of another order of laws so to speak, laws which usually have little touch with this plane, which constitutes

miracle. If miracles were natural in the sense which we ordinarily understand by the word, we should not have witnessed the almost passionate effort on the part of scientific men in the generation just passed to get rid of them as things contrary to nature and impossible. There must be some very marked distinction between the 'works' and 'powers' spoken of as miracles (amounting almost to a difference in kind) and the ordinary facts of nature or they would not have produced such intense incredulity in scientific students of nature. And in so far as they are not according to the so-called laws of nature, even markedly upsetting these, they can truly be spoken of as supernatural, coming from a plane lying deeper than our known world of natural phenomena. And we shall have greatly to alter the connotation of 'natural' if we are to make it cover these laws of a more mental or spiritual plane. It is true that there is evidence that these higher laws are likely in the future to play a far more important part in our life on this plane, and that by familiarity with them they may cease to seem marvellous; yet there still

will be the two distinct sets of laws, distinct from each other, the physical and the superphysical, although related of course in a Unity as all emanating from the Creator. . . . It is best to avoid confusion and to recognise that we are so constituted as to have, if we will live up to our inheritance, more or less, the command of the laws of at least two planes and possibly more."[4]

Again, under the influence of idealism, the natural has been alleged to be the supernatural, in as much as its whole meaning, its bulk, is spiritual. Such a view no Christian is concerned to deny; God is the ground of the material universe and its laws are His will. Yet again it seems to me in its practical import misleading and dangerous. For it almost irresistibly tends to identify God with the world and to lead right on to Pantheism. At least it favours the view that God is not above, but implicated in the course of nature; that He cannot break the routine of a natural evolution, operating in fixed ways known to science.

Nature from this standpoint always tends

to mean "nature as she appears to man from a certain point of view — i.e., from the standpoint of mechanical causation"; if this is not asserted it is always implied.[5] It leads further to the view that the whole universe is one in such a way that, though that oneness be spiritual, in it there can be no true individuality, no freedom, and nothing like the Gospel drama of the soul. These things have a certain relative value, but they cannot be the saving Truth men used to think them. I do not say that all who object to the term supernatural hold this. But I think that the logical implication of their thought is in this direction, and that many find therein the main stumbling block to Faith. It is against such views that supernatural is in its right place, as the epithet distinctive of Christianity. No Christian need deny the spiritual significance of matter or assert that the physical world is to be explained apart from God. Rather he asserts the contrary. But he must assert that God is very much more than the soul of the world; it is His work, not merely His garment. He is as much and more beyond it as I,

in my personality, am beyond the body which is the instrument of my life here. It is sometimes said that this distinction between nature and the supernatural is harmful because it secularises the greater part of life. But, as a fact, to give up the distinction tends in the long run to secularise the whole of it. By saying that no day is specially sacred, you will not make the ordinary man keep all days as the Lord's; rather he will more and more shut God out of his life. Prayer is possible at any time and at all occupations, but the man who prays when he is cleaning his boots is always likely to be the man who has set apart times to keep up the habit. It is so through all this range of distinctions, those between sacred and secular, Sunday and weekday, clergy and laity, the Church and the world, venial and mortal sins. All of them are relative, not absolute. To press any to an extreme is dangerous. But to leave them out is more dangerous still. Human nature being what it is, you tend to banish God altogether if you say that because He is omnipresent there are to be no sacred places or seasons. While if

you assert that all sins are equal, though in one sense it is true, you will make the ordinary man treat all sin as venial and none as serious. A great deal of the current laxity in regard to sin has come from the omission to make use of a distinction between mortal and venial sin, which is only approximately true. We have fallen in consequence into the worse error of treating sin as unimportant.

The supreme danger, however, of this dislike of the idea of the supernatural is that in so far as it is not hostile to religion it ministers to a fashionable Pantheism, which in the long run condones the most revolting acts, because somehow or other they are part of God's world. In the past generation men have given in a little too much to this habit of thought. We have passed through an age best termed Alexandrian, when men have been concerned to shew the assimilations between Christian and other systems and have almost forgotten the difference in the process. So much alive have they been to the human environment that they have neglected to emphasize the divine origin of the Gospel. Now, it

seems, we need rather a Tertullianist or Augustinian presentment of the faith insisting more on its difference from, than its approximation to, other systems; on the vital change it brought, rather than on the connection, however undoubted, with the old; on the gift of a new life, that makes it what it is. Both sides are true; what might be roughly called the Greek, or the Johannine view of things, and the Latin or the Pauline; at this moment it is the latter that we need to bring into relief.

As I have tried to shew, it is these unique, incommunicable, other-worldly elements that make the beauty of the Christian Faith, even though it be false. These it is which give it its own aroma. To cut out of it all miracle because it is improbable, the doctrine of the Incarnation because it is mysterious, the glory of sins forgiven because it is hard to rationalise, all this would be to cut out what is of real charm in the Christian, as distinct from other systems; while it seems to me that those who are for this drastic treatment are attaching a certainty and infallibility to some modern habits of thought which they

do not possess even in regard to normal human life, and are still less likely to possess in regard to any revelation from unseen powers. The assumption at the basis of George Tyrrell's *Christianity at the Cross Roads* seems to be that wherever Christianity conflicts with our modern mental scheme, it must be trimmed to make the two square. This view seems to be quite without ground. Neither facts nor theory justify our holding the dogma of the infallibility of the modern Western mind. Its most acute representatives do not claim this infallibility, and the intellectual anarchy of our day reveals its inadequacy. Most of all, however, is its limitation displayed in the amazing lack of certain elements of noble living, which are found in civilisations whose spirit is different. It lays stress on one set of qualities and ignores others, and the result is monstrosity. It is precisely because the Christian Faith does involve these other elements, because it demands a mental habit different from that now popular, that it is at least arresting. True or false, its sincere profession sets us free from the idols of our

modern cave and permits us to look at God's universe with the eyes of the penitent, the lover, and the child. To take from the Christian Faith the elements that make this possible is to destroy its inalienable charm and remove from it its main source of attraction, as compared with other schemes austere, imposing, and philosophical though they be.

I think then that we do right in emphasizing the uniqueness of the Christian claim and insisting on the wisdom of the use of the word supernatural. But it is also true that there is a very important sense, in which the natural is the supernatural, and that our whole problem turns on this truth. The real question between Christianity and its adversaries is concerned not with the miracles of Jesus, but with the possibility of human freedom. The antecedent difficulty which keeps men from Christian Faith is commonly understood to be this problem of the miraculous. This is true, but it is true only because miracles are a part of the larger issue between freedom and necessity. All along the line there is

one and only one fundamental difficulty, that created by "scientific fatalism." It is clear that without some doctrine of human freedom the Christian scheme and the whole theory of sin and redemption is nonsense. What is less obvious is that once it be established that the acts of men are not all of them determined, the *a priori* argument against miracles is gone. Supposing our wills be free, we are spirits who choose and, acting frequently upon the material of nature, alter and interfere with its arrangements. We make that happen which apart from our free act would not happen. *A miracle only asserts the same about a being or beings also free and with wider knowledge than ours.* When God employs the forces of nature without any apparent interference, we call His act a special providence; when He brings forces into play which we cannot manipulate, we call the act a miracle. Both are equally involved in the conception of God's freedom, that is His personality. Both are equally opposed to the mechanical theory of the world and are apt to be laughed out of court. If there be a spirit world besides

man at all, we can hardly suppose that the beings within it are not possessed of wider knowledge than ours, and they will produce effects more startling. The whole problem turns on the reality of freedom, for that involves even in ourselves powers which may well be called supernatural. It is of course conceivable that there are no higher beings in the universe than we are. If that were so, of course miracles in the ordinary sense could not happen. But once grant that God is to be thought of as the free Being who created and controlled the world, then it is really less difficult to credit His action than our own; for we know very well that our life is dependent. Once grant, however, that our acts are free, or some of them, and the whole edifice of a system of rigid mechanism falls to the ground; and we must, at least, allow the possibility of such irruptions from the world beyond sight as are best called miraculous.

On this matter of freedom it is needless to dwell at length. The problem is as old as thought. Moreover, one of the clearest defences of human freedom has been made, in this place, by William James.[6]

This much, however, I would say. Freedom, not of all but of some actions, is to me an immediate doctrine of consciousness, a primary fact, the most real thing in life. So much is it a part of my life that to deny this fact reduces it to ruins. As Dr. Pringle-Pattison says, "Inexplicable in a sense as man's personal agency is — the one perpetual miracle — it is nevertheless our overt datum and our only clue to the mystery of existence." [7] I find further that in practice this belief is the foundation of social life, is assumed in every personal judgment; and however they may explain it in theory, all men make it in practice the presupposition of their mutual intercourse. So far then as I am concerned, if I had to choose, I would prefer the belief that there is something radically inadequate in human reasoning if, as apparently it does, it leads to determinism; I should prefer this alternative to the acceptance of determinism. For there may be this error. It is a pure act of faith that you can get a rationalistically arranged scheme of things. The facts of life are there, whether we can harmonise them by reason or any other

faculty. We do direct and restrain our actions. That we know, if we know anything. And to substitute any intellectualist scheme, however apparently secure, for what is to me the *prius* of all thinking, the knowledge of freedom, seems to me to put the cart before the horse and to be denying facts in deference to a constructive theory which may be false. Probably, indeed, as Bergson says, this notion of freedom is absolute and cannot be analyzed. The moment you begin to argue about it, you have really conceded the point to your adversary. Freedom must be accepted as a given fact, mysterious like the primary facts of life. In all there is something unfathomable, an "irreducible surd." Yet so far as observation goes, it is true to say that we live in a world of free beings standing "free and doubtful as at the cross roads in a forest." So far from the future being predictable, the daily and hourly experience of every man, woman, and child alive is expressed in the maxim of William the Waiter, "You never can tell, Sir, you never can tell." Part of life may obviously be made subject to calculation, and of

another part you can say what will probably occur, and in much more you can state that one of two things is more than probable. More than that you cannot do. And every attempt to do more breaks down in face of the amazing uncertainty of life.

Once let the fact of freedom be granted, and it may be said that we live, here and now, a life which is truly described as supernatural. For in that case we ourselves are something more than parts of nature. Moreover, if as a fact there are a number of different centres of indetermination, the whole intellectualist scheme of the universe has broken down, because it is only the projection into mental terms of notions of mechanical necessity. Reality is now seen to be of such a nature that you cannot do more than predict what will happen in the physical world, provided certain disturbing causes, such as the free will of spiritual beings, do not operate; while the element of possible changes is much greater if you postulate a God who is free; i.e., personal and all-knowing. The real battle then in regard to miracles is that which ranges round the personality

of man and of God. Both hang together. Personalism — the doctrine of the universe as a world of spirits — is the point at issue in all the discussions. Pantheism is a creed the very opposite of this; it begins by denying human personality, it ends by denying Divine. More and more is it become clear that the battle of the future is one between some form or other of *cosmic* emotion which sacrifices all real distinctions in the desire to attain an all-embracing unity and Christianity with its insistence on the reality of the individual life of men and the personal being of God. Belief in Christ is increasingly recognised by our opponents as the great obstacle to the prevalence of Pantheistic monism. The reason is that the life of Jesus is the supreme revelation of the personal love of God, while His death and rising again are the assurance to all men of their value in God's sight and their participation not as means only, but as ends in the life of the world.

LECTURE IV

SION OR THE CHRISTIAN FACT

LAST summer, if you met a casual acquaintance come home from his holidays, what was the scene he was most likely to have visited? One of those macadamized cities, the flower of our civilisation? I think not. Perhaps he sought communion with nature in quiet places and refreshed his mind by rustic pursuits; or perhaps he climbed peaks or emulated the toils of Ulysses. One tribute, however, was paid by most of those who had the means. Away from the roar of wheels and heedless of our pleasures, there lies an obscure village in a backward country off the highway of the tourist. To Ober-Ammergau came men and women of every faith, there to watch in awe the drama of the Cross or weep at the parting of Mary and her Son. Unlured by luxuries they went on this quest, and

no star singer or artist attracted them. It was just a few villagers trained from youth up to this great act, but not otherwise differing from Bavarian peasants.

What is the ground of this interest? It does not indeed prove so much as a pilgrimage to Our Lady of Walsingham in the Middle Ages, or that made memorable by Chaucer to the shrine of the poor man's Archbishop who dared to withstand a monarch more powerful than the Kaiser. For modern science has made the rough places plain to the traveller, while the act which formerly was one of devotion is now largely due to curiosity. For all that, this interest is worthy of remark in an age when, according to Thomas Hardy, a settled melancholy is coming over the educated classes with the decline of the belief in a beneficent power, and when by universal agreement ideals essentially Pagan have hold of numbers of educated people. How is it that the story of the Passion holds still so conquering a charm? You would not have secured a tithe of that company for the pictured presentment of the death of any other religious teacher — not even

Mrs. Baker Eddy. It is strange what an attraction the Christian Church still possesses even for men who scorn her claims. Privately people may reject and attack these claims and in public laugh to scorn all Christian ideals, yet the moment they move one step in the pursuit of romance, they are forced to acknowledge and even to learn from her. It is curious to see in the houses of people to whom the Catholic Church is *anathema* copies of altar pieces and madonnas. Even more amazing it is to watch the struggles of non-Christian artists and poets to get away from this atmosphere. But the moment they drop into romance, it comes back to them. Agnostics will fill their holidays with visits to S. Ambrogio or S. Mark's and wax learned over the date or constitution of some monastic house, while they would cut off their right hand rather than give credence to those things which alone made such places possible. Human culture, so far as it looks before and after and seeks to bring men into the society of "the best that is known and thought in the world," is inextricably entangled with the Christian

tradition. In consequence you now find intransigeants like John Davidson, the poet, opposed to all culture, as the only means of finally cutting off the entail of religion. Others make what is perhaps a worse error and confuse an æsthetic interest in stained glass or Church embroidery with a living faith.

Now what makes possible such a spectacle as that at Ober-Ammergau? Not money. Millionaires all the world over might club together, but they could not produce a Passion-Play. It is no case of the demand creating the supply. This thing so touching and wonderful could never have been at all, and would long since have died but for the faith of those who produce it. To these poor peasants, so inferior to our enlightenment, this wonder is real. It belongs to their life as Christians. Their act is solid with that on Calvary.

There is the fact of which we seek the interpretation — that tremendous event and its continuing influence in the life of society and the individual. We cannot separate these things. If we are to arrive at any satisfying estimate, we have to take all

three as part of one great fact: the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth, the society in which His spirit acts, and the present reality of His gifts in individual experience. We must start from the actual phenomenon of today, the individual Christian, who is what he is as sharer in the common life of the Church; and this common life is continuous with the events of Calvary and the first Easter and may not be comprehended apart from them; and *vice versa.* Of any event the evidence is to be sought in the effects which it produces (and this is the case even with the testimony of eye-witnesses). The Resurrection is no exception to this law. Part of its evidence is to be sought in that collection of documents we call the New Testament. But this is only part. Other parts are the history of the Church and its living power in the experience of men and women today.

Of these facts all symbolised in the Passion-Play there are, roughly speaking, two interpretations and two only. According to the former, religion is a phenomenon well-nigh universal. It breaks out in Pro-

tean forms, but all are purely human. To such a view the emergence of the Christian Faith, its victory, and its present efficacy form merely the cardinal instance of this universal phenomenon. It has no special or unique value, owes much to local and partial influences, and though possibly the highest form which the religious instinct has yet assumed, is not final and is likely to be superseded — is, indeed, already vanishing. Whatever substratum of fact underlies the Evangelical narrative, and it is not large, there must have been enough to arrest and stimulate the imagination of mankind.

Moreover, as Gibbon long since pointed out in his famous sixteenth chapter, there were other circumstances peculiarly favourable to the growth of a society claiming supernatural credentials and assuring to any man a life beyond. Slowly and after many conflicts that society gathered cohesion, and conquering all rivals such as the cult of Mithra or Neoplatonism, came at last to dominate the civilised world. That predominance, more than half temporal, was shattered by the Renaissance

and the Reformation. True, the Christian Church still lives on. But it is only a living power in small groups. Some of its apparent strength is due to its inherited wealth and to the general lack of higher education. All this, however, is but for the moment. We are at the beginning of the end. Either the Christian Church will lighten the ship of its Jonah burden of the supernatural and live on as a frankly human institution, or it will be superseded by some fresh religious synthesis. Such a synthesis would not repudiate the Divine, but would rigidly exclude all notions of God, as distinct from the developing life of nature, including men. Its horizons would be limited by this world. It would make a more universal appeal than the Christian Faith, because its claims would be less startling; and no man who looks for the improvement of the race would find himself excluded from it.

The naturalistic theory of Christianity takes on different colours with the temperament of the speaker. From the hysterical contempt of Nietzsche, the hostility of writers like Mr. Dickinson and Mr. Sturt,

we may pass through almost every stage of increasing admiration, with one great proviso, that Jesus is not to be worshipped as God. Even among those who adhere to the Christian name there are some who treat Him as little more than the first of human teachers, while the more extreme modernists openly avow that it is only the ideas of Christianity that matter, and that it is of no importance whether any of the alleged facts, supernatural or not, happened at all. We are to rest in an "imaginary portrait" and rejoice in an inherited cult, heedless of aught but their existence today. Others of them will stop short of this, yet strip the central figure of every actual quality that points beyond, and proclaim a doctrine of the Divine Immanence little removed from Pantheism. A recent expression to this view in its unrelieved crudity has been given by Mr. Thompson, the Dean of Divinity of Magdalen College, Oxford. His work is not valuable except as evidence. It shews the inwardness of much that in other forms allures many minds. For in that work the immanent logic of a great deal of the critical movement is seen to

develop itself into an assured repudiation of all influence from a world beyond.

What I want to emphasize is that within this naturalistic interpretation every variety of sentiment and moral ideal is possible, from Pagan to Catholic ethics. All, however, unite to repudiate the idea of a unique revelation and of supernatural grace or facts; all are founded on rejection of "supernaturalism" in the usual sense.

Now let us consider the opposing view. That asserts that there is about this episode something more than human, and that its differences from all other religions and philosophies are more important than its resemblances. It is to man the supreme guarantee of a something more than the visible world and its development, even if that visible world be thought of as spiritual. It marks the entrance into this life of forces from a spirit world beyond, and in this sense is nothing if not other-worldly. Of course its human aspects are not to be denied, and the chief perplexities arise from the refusal of Christians to treat the

life of Jesus as a mere "theophany." As Canon Simpson says[1]:

"The history of Christian doctrine made it abundantly clear that men have found it harder to represent to themselves the real manhood of the Son of God than the perfect Godhead of the Son of Man."

Nor need we suppose that there is anything final in the efforts hitherto made to express this double-faced fact. The recent work of Dr. Sanday on *Christologies Ancient and Modern* is alone evidence of this; for here is a writer avowedly Nicene seeking the explanation in the doctrine of the subliminal self. How far the Church will go in this direction one cannot at this stage predict, but even the suggestion of it is a proof that finality is not reached — nor indeed is it likely to be.[2] Of a fact so essentially mysterious as the entrance into human life, under human conditions, of that Life, which always burns and is never extinguished, all our statements must be so much below the truth that now one side and now the other will be emphasized. The belief is in the supernatural character of this, that great

mystery of godliness, of which S. Paul spoke, "God manifest in the flesh."

The form of this belief may vary in different ages, and as Dr. Sanday illustrates, take on a different colour, even while the symbolic expression remains unchanged; otherwise the creeds would be something other than symbols. All, however, who hold it would agree in this — that in the story told in the Gospels there is evidence of a peculiar outbreak from the spirit world. It is not merely an uprush of religious emotion. This "irruption" of the Divine into the world of phenomena guarantees the nature of God as being Love; it destroys the presuppositions of naturalism, in that it assures to each of us a life hereafter and delivers us from that strange disease of the will we call "sin," restoring the broken unity between the soul and God; of Whom it reveals so much as can be shewn in human life.

In the former of these two views, even, if we take it as it is nearest to the Nicene faith, the Christian fact has much teaching for man. But that teaching is of the highest to which human love can aspire. It is a

doctrine of man. On the latter view the teaching is of the depths to which God's Love can descend. It is a doctrine of God. He stooped to conquer. The unique note of the Christian religion is *the humility of God.* Further, the one interpretation need never get beyond the Divine Immanence. The other reveals the Divine Transcendence. It preserves the distinctness of man and God alike, while it asserts that God is able so to limit Himself as to become Incarnate. It is needless to develop at length what this view involves. For it has embodied itself in the Christian Church. The whole Catholic Evangelical theology of grace, of the Sacraments, of the Atonement and the Incarnation, is but its expression; inadequate, it is true, and figurative, but generated in the need of defending the one supreme fact of the Divine and supernatural character of the whole order against interpretations which in the long run would have destroyed it.

But we must not exaggerate. This view, like its contrary, may be held with the widest differences of detail. It is, as a fact,

maintained by many whom a rigid orthodoxy would repudiate. It would include such men as a historian who once said to me, "I believe firmly in the Divinity of Christ and the Atonement, but I don't believe in anything else, not the Church or the Sacraments or the Holy Ghost." It would include the semi-Arian, who worships Christ as Lord and holds firmly to the Logos-*doctrine*, but has difficulties about even the simplest of the Creeds. It would include those who adhered to the formula suggested by Dr. Denny, "I believe in God through Jesus Christ," provided that formula were interpreted according to the previous argument of the writer. It would include some who deny certain facts such as the Birth Story or the Empty Tomb, which seem to most of us integral to the supernatural nature of the whole. That may be true. For all that, it is not to be gainsaid that Professor Burkitt,[3] in his pamphlet on *The Failure of Liberal Christianity*, while he rejects those facts, argues most convincingly that the evidence of the documents as a whole compels the supernatural theory of the origin of the Church and justifies the

Athanasian Creed. It is hardly too much to describe this pamphlet as epoch-making, for it marks the way in which a devout mind, arguing from the critical basis, but undeterred by prepossessions against the supernatural, is driven to a position which is fundamentally that of the Church. A somewhat similar view is that of Dr. Forsyth in his work on *The Person and Place of Jesus Christ.* I need hardly add that this view of the fundamentally mysterious nature of the New Testament experience is held by men owning every kind of ecclesiastical allegiance. On the other hand from this standpoint, there would be excluded many of the ultra-modernists, strong though they may be in the sense of the value both of the Church and Sacraments, and many "liberal" theologians, who would rule out the "supra-normal." Professor Denny, Professor Burkitt, Dr. Forsyth, Dr. Garvie, Dr. Orr, Dr. Seeberg, Dr. Knowling, Mr. Wilfrid Ward, Mr. Gilbert Chesterton, the Bishops of Birmingham and Durham, Evangelical Dissenters and Ultramontanes may seem a rather heterogeneous company. Doubtless

many of them would condemn as woefully inadequate the theology that contents the other. Yet all have this in common. They have crossed the Rubicon. All are on the other side of the line which divides the natural from the supernatural theory of the origin of Christianity. All are unable to believe that the reduced Christianity dear to the Teutonic savant comes at all close to the facts; all are at one in their refusal to surrender the supernatural in deference to the naturalistic bias.

It is right to put the question in this broad manner, as one which is concerned with our view of the nature of the experience as a whole. We are putting the cart before the horse, when we argue, as though the question were first and foremost concerned with dogma. Dogma only brings out the implications of the supernatural view, and it cannot be arrived at independently or argued about as consisting of so many isolated propositions. The Creeds are the intellectual expressions of this faith, developed in the life of the Church, and they guard its essential nature,

which is to be supernatural. It is this supernatural character which is its *differentia.* On this we have to make up our mind before, not after, we consider the Creeds. The enquirer must decide whether or no these supernatural claims were made, and then whether he can accept them. Either you fit Jesus Christ into the normal categories or He eludes them. The Christian Church is either one episode in the natural development of mankind or it is something superadded. That is the real difficulty involved in the Incarnation and in the higher view about Church and Sacraments. Whatever class you put them in, you find it inadequate. Treat Jesus Christ as purely human and you fail to explain most of His characteristic deeds and words, even if you give up the theory of fraud. Treat Him as God, and His essential human quality, His local temperament and horizons, are hard to comprehend; though indeed we never could say beforehand what limitations of power and knowledge an Incarnation does not involve. The Athanasian Creed and all Catholic theology puts the two sides together, but does not remove

the difficulty. They are never altogether harmonised; they never will be, till we reach the beatific vision. But any simpler creed is even harder. For it compels us to give up the facts.

Moreover, it leaves you without any adequate explanation of the origin and expansion of the Church. As Gibbon long since discerned, the crucial difficulty of the enquirer is that of explaining the existence of the Church. And indeed that difficulty is greater than he knew. The Church needs explanation not merely as a past, but as a present fact, stretching back to the dawn of history and achieving since Gibbon the most marvellous of all its revivals. All this you must describe as either part of the natural course of human development or as something catastrophic breaking the chain, invading the sphere of the natural, a gift from beyond.

As in the words of a writer I have quoted more than once — Eucken[4]:

"In the case of Christianity it is man's moral life which harbours this contradiction. Christianity holds that, down to

the very roots of his moral nature, man is especially estranged from what is right, and therefore requires that he shall become a new creature and live a new life. The form which this conviction has taken in concept and in doctrine is no doubt open to attack on many sides, but so long as the fundamental fact survived as an inspiration in human experience, it triumphed over all the objections brought against it. But the modern world, dazzled by the splendour of its own achievements, armed with its consciousness of power, stimulated by its craving for a fuller and a richer life, has thrust such experience into the background and for a time forgotten it. And now the problems and perplexities of the nineteenth century and our own have thrust it forward once more, and, with growing insistence, are challenging the old complacent belief in the work of civilisation and the light-hearted enthusiasm for progress.

"It becomes increasingly difficult not to recognise the sharp contradiction which runs through the whole life of man and comes to a head in his moral behaviour."

And again, in *Christianity and the New Idealism*, he says:

"Its presence attests the invasion of our life by a new order of reality, involving a breach in the causal order of nature, tearing through the existing system of connexions, rendering for ever impossible a rational synthesis of reality within the limits of sense-experience, and precluding any monism of the world as we find it."

Decide this point one way or the other and you have decided everything, and no mere jettison of this or that detail will bring you in line with the opponent theory. In the same way that a very small dose of free will means a complete breach with the rationalist, so here accept the supernatural in however small a degree and the logic of it carries you right on to the Church with the Creeds. Nothing but some accident of temper or training will hinder you from being one with that great continuous body, which enshrines this supernatural life in all its fulness. Deny this suprahuman character, and however much you may gild your unbelief with phrases of reverence, and even emphasize devotion

to the Church of your fathers, and desire to be part of the main stream of Christian life, you are yet on the inclined plane which leads far away from it. To scientific fatalism in some form or other, if not the individual (for he does not always develop the logic of his position), at least the society, which adopts such denial, will come at the last.

The problem, then, is one as to the transcendental or the normal character of this experience or group of experiences; the central facts as recorded in the New Testament, the impression made by them at the time, and the continuance of that impression in the Church and its individual members. Christian theology issues from the attempt to guard this truth of the supernatural character of this experience against interpretations which explicitly or implicitly involve its denial. Whether the theology be coherent or well-expressed is one thing. That its essence is this faith in a mystery is unquestioned alike by friend and foe.

I state the problem in this way because it seems to me an error to treat the topic

analytically; isolating this or that detail and then either from the traditional standpoint or its opposite building up a series of conclusions. As a fact, we are dealing not with a number of isolated events apparently marvellous, each to be discussed *in vacuo*, but with a great experience of human life extending from the converted sinner of today right back to "that strange man upon the Cross" and all that He implies. The question is, What does that experience mean? Even in regard to the New Testament it is a mistake to adopt this purely analytic method. It is not the Virgin Birth, or the Empty Tomb, or the Transfiguration, or the feeding of the five thousand, or the walking on the water, or the tremendous claims of Christ, or the stories of the Apostles, or the experience of S. Paul, or the theory of S. John; it is all these things together. Or, to be accurate, it is the atmosphere, the mental world, in which all these things take place, that is in question. Men would never have made this error were it not for our habit of making words and single events a screen which veils life instead of revealing it, and discussing

not real experience, but the articulate expression of it, which never is complete and can at best be no more than symbolic.

The first thing to decide is our view of the total character of the narrative, taken in unison with its living issues (as the title of the Kaiser is part of the evidence for the power of Julius Cæsar). When we have made up our minds as to what that character is, and further, being what it is, whether we can accept or reject it, then and then only shall we be ready to discuss it in detail.

As a matter of fact, this is precisely what is done. Half of the anti-Christian criticism of the records, while it professes to be an open enquiry, is in reality only an examination of this or that detail *with the humanist interpretations of the narrative as a whole taken for granted, though carefully concealed.* Too many writers on the orthodox side have been content to examine these theories, without considering the presuppositions; thus tacitly offering a victory to their adversaries.

But this is not all. If the problem be primarily one about the total impression,

it does not need a specialist to determine its results. On the general character of the alleged occurrences of the Gospel, or the experience of the early Church, as mirrored in S. Paul, in S. Peter, in S. John, it needs no specialist nor any great knowledge to come to a valid conclusion. In this matter the appeal to the plain man and that to the historic consciousness of Christendom comes to the same thing. Such matters as the piecing together of the narratives, the priority of S. Mark, or the nature of Q, or the genuineness of S. Peter's and S. Jude's Epistles, can only be argued by specialists. But no expert is needed to pronounce on the general character of the impression created by the accounts of Jesus or the experiences of S. Paul. Nothing is needed but attentive reading, and the critics who would cut all the extraordinary elements and leave a *caput mortuum* of morality touched with emotion (yet still to be called Christianity) would never have won half their vogue had not the reading of the New Testament gone out of fashion. Their strength comes from their appealing to a world which has ceased to use the Bible

devotionally. It was a maxim of the Reformers that the Scriptures bore their meaning on their face, and that every man could be his own interpreter. Applied to single texts this notion is contrary to fact; for we need to go behind the New Testament to the society which produced it, just as we need to go behind Dante or Homer to the civilisation which environed them. The maxim resulted in a greater variety of views among Christians than had before seemed possible; each view basing itself on the Bible. If, however, we take the New Testament as a whole, the Reformers were not so far wrong. Whether or no he believes it, the plain man who reads the New Testament has little doubt of the transcendent claim made by Jesus Christ; nor does he deny that there was an experience of redemption which believed itself to be connected with the Cross, and of a new life in unison with the Risen Lord. How these things are to be harmonised may be matters for the Church, and what their theological implications exclude or allow. How to get them into relation with ordinary life is a problem still unsolved.

But that this is their general character is only to be denied by that class of mind that asserts that Bacon wrote Shakespeare, or, like Samuel Butler, that the Odyssey was a suffragist manifesto. The authority of the Church, indeed, here as in other matters, only operates to protect the ordinary man against the excesses of one-sided talent, and is indeed essentially democratic.

Still the point remains, What are we to think of it all? To me it appears plain that we have evidence of some invasion from that world beyond, whose possibility it would be rash to deny. So far as the evidence goes, we have to do with a unique experience, paralleled in mystical literature, but quite other than normal. All seems to point to the gradual opening of men's eyes to an element strange and superhuman in the life of Jesus. Reluctantly, with the slow-moving intelligence of peasants, the Apostles began to ask, What manner of man is this? After long feeling the attraction of His person, and treating His healing miracles as a thing of course, they began at last to see in Him something more — the Christ, the Son of the Living

God. Then for a time all their hopes were dashed by the tragedy of Calvary, to us so splendid, to them so chill and drab. Again on reluctant eyes there bursts the light of Easter, and in its blinding glare the Church has lived ever since. What wonder if the accounts be confused, or if there are difficulties in the theology which guards it. The whole thing is difficult, like all ultimate facts; for mystery is in the nature of things and nothing real but shares it. There, however, it is dazzling still, this poor uneducated Galilean criminal, worshipped today as God and starting a movement with no real parallel in history. For neither the Buddhists nor Mohammed can really be compared. It is this, the total massive impression of something unearthly, that beats in upon the reader. In the long run this impression carries evidence of its own reality — to all who are not obsessed by theories, which bar the door to it. Much may be attributed to the mythopœic faculty. But here the simplicity of the writing, the amazing beauty of the ideal, the patent fact that the Epistles of S. Paul utter an actual personal experience, seem to point

against the view that all that is distinctive in the events was created by vivid imagination. This is further strengthened by the terrific after-results, including the life and inward experience of today. It is really on account of the impression of the whole that we believe in the parts; and not *vice versa*. This is, I take it, the significance of the use of the term the Faith as a single thing, as it is at the bottom of the appeal to authority. There are these three strange facts: myself with my failures and aspirations, — many more like me: the amazing vision of Jesus: and the new life that came through Him and goes on still. Apart from prepossessions, what is there left me but to say, "Neither is there any other name given under Heaven, whereby men may be saved"? Or as a friend once wrote to me, "Perhaps after all there is a fact at the bottom of Christianity."

I do not say that all this can be proved, but I do say that there is a cumulative argument. On the personal, the social, and the historic side considerations arise which mutually support each other. On the actual matter of historical enquiry about the cen-

tral figure, there is once more a cumulative argument. No single detail is conclusive by itself, but all together make a positive unity which is not so readily found in the alternative explanation. These other explanations are not impossible, but they do great violence to documents and the consciousness of the Church and have all the marks of a non-natural reconstruction, adopted in obedience to a preconceived theory. All that the traditional view needs for its acceptance in its main features is the removal of the presupposition that miracles do not happen. There is, I think, in this view a definite ground of assurance to those whose craving is well described by Mr. Hardy in *The Gospel of Pain.*[5]

"Men and women need something more central than the emotions, more sane than the wistful mood of aspiration. They do not require 'demonstration' or 'logical proof'; they have reacted from 'schemes' and 'systems'; but conviction they do want. They want assurance on common-sense grounds. Such grounds they have in practical life, where no one pays a thought to logic or waits a moment for demonstra-

tion. Are they to be blamed for requiring such in religion? Granted one conviction, brought out of the facts of life, one clear hint of order and purpose, and the spiritual assurance of the ages of faith 'might again inspire the world.'"

We are asked whether it is wise to accept this Faith. We reply: it is the part of wisdom to accept that account of things which includes the relevant facts. Whether or no we can coordinate the facts into a coherent system, we know not. That is a matter of faith. There will always be those who value and those who dislike a clearly articulated "diagrammatic" view. In any case we have to get the facts in, however we are to explain them. Now this Faith includes as nothing else does the facts of life as it is lived. Avowedly it appeals to the nature of man, as a being who chooses, who loves, and who sins. The other systems all tend to ignore these facts in whole or in part.

So far as the facts of human life are concerned, no system has been developed for dealing with them at all comparable to that

of the Christian Church. No view which repudiates freedom but in the long run breaks upon the rock of personality. Again no system which is not social, no purely individualist religion, but is false to the nature of man; and sociality involves authority. It is only owing to the high organisation of modern life, and the support given to each individual, that sheer individualism is even conceivable.[6]

Religion without a Church is not really possible, for not only is man a social animal, but religion is essentially social. And more and more is the comparative study of religion making it clear that men are fundamentally religious. This is indeed one of the main difficulties that face the apologist. For while religion in general is seen to be a necessary element in the make-up of human life, the same observation by no means tells in favour of any religion in particular; rather it tends to an impartial patronage of all. Taking it, however, as at last settled that religion is a human property, we may well proceed to ask ourselves whether the Catholic Church does not enshrine the central experience of the race, and whether any

of the competing systems is seriously to be compared with it. That does not mean that they have nothing to teach us. Even in our worship we have become too deeply occidentalised, and we need once more to drink at the Eastern springs. We are indeed doing so; the growth of interest in mysticism is evidence.

Speaking on the whole, can anyone seriously maintain that any other religion is likely to take the place of the Christian, or that any other society can approach the Christian Church in the production of the highest characters? All societies, even religious, are ultimately judged by the type of character they tend to produce. For, having settled the problem of freedom, it remains to be seen what you will do with it. Some of the most passionate exponents of freedom at this moment are in the anti-Christian camp; they despise the Christian character. I do not mean the character of Christians. It is not because we fall short of our ideal (we all do more or less); it is our ideal itself that wins this scorn. So long as men are content to admire Christ and the Christian character,

so long will they find grounds good or bad for adhering to the Church. Nietzsche, indeed, as we saw last time, was aware of this and directed his polemic on this very point. If you dislike the Christian character and consider that its virtues are vices, there is no use arguing about the evidence of the Faith. You will surely find grounds for discarding it. If you admire the Christian and find in holiness "the beauty of God," then you will in the long run surrender yourself to that society in which it thrives, or at least you will desire to do so, though you may be deterred either by the intellectual difficulty or by the rarity with which the ideal is realized. At least your sympathies will be all on that side. The question of every calling, every school, and every profession is not what it teaches, but the kind of men it produces. A man's own choice is determined in nine cases out of ten by whether he likes the law or the army or literature, and finds in it the kind of men he cares to live with. So with the Christian Church. The supreme practical question is what kind of people does she make; all individuals are largely a product

of their society. In so far as you are able to compare Christians with non-Christians, which type would you wish to be like? Only, be it remembered, it is unfair to compare the mere average Christian with some "saint of rationalism" like John Stuart Mill, or even to take the least inspired moments of the saint and bid men judge his inferiority. The Church must be judged by its truly characteristic products no less than a school or college or nation. I do not believe that in our apologetic we have made enough use of the saints. We should argue on a sounder basis, if we talked a little more of the martyrs. It would not in all things make matters easier. For the modern world tolerates sanctity rather than admires it, and outside the Bible regards it as almost wicked to believe in saints. Further, it has a notion of what the saints are that is almost entirely false to the facts, and before they can be made an apologetic argument their character, their variety, their enormous practical influence, and their abilities need to be better known. When, however, the lay figure of a most unnatural being has

been replaced by the living reality, it will be found that they were and are the most persuasive of all arguments.

For it is this sharing in a great society, this communion of saints, which is one great charm of the Christian life. By it we enter into the life of the striving sinners (the best description of the saint) of all ages and make their achievements ours. We are united not only with the living, but with the dead. There is truth in the anachronisms of the Old Masters, who paint a S. Augustine, a S. Francis, a S. Chrysostom kneeling simultaneously at the foot of the Cross. So with other things. There are elements in the doctrine, in the devotion, in the ritual, even in vestment and gesture, which sway us with the accumulated force of all the generations who have used them and help us to share in "the long result of time." All authority is social in its nature; it is the life of the community, larger than all its members, in which these things grow to maturity and wherein all are welded to harmony. In a thousand subtle and imperceptible ways this authority is all about us, uniting in intimacy the present and the

past, the near and the far. A man who takes part in a high celebration of the Eucharist is a witness and a sharer in the unity of history. In this worship he is carried far back through many ages, breathing climates older than the Christian, and he, a modern, is at one with primitive man and also has the promise of the future.[7] It is then, as gathering in itself the religious experience of mankind, that the Christian Church makes its appeal, and, as sharing in the central stream of the Life, that the Catholic would justify himself. For reasons, not relevant to discuss here, I do not believe the theory of Papal omnipotence to be central. But facts appear to shew that the further we go from what is Catholic, the greater danger we are in of becoming, in Tyrrell's phrase, "pert and provincial"; even though our devotion to Jesus be real, there is in such cases a narrowness and lack of freedom, because so many of the treasures of the past have been deliberately foregone. In England in the past we have been too "provincial," and we do well to lend all honour to those who are striving to restore in all their touching and immemorial beauty

certain age-long notes of Catholic faith, notably those which have to do with the Communion of Saints. All this may be held with the widest allowance for difference in local custom and national feeling, no less than for the individual temperaments, which are not intended all to emphasize the same aspects of faith and worship.

All this, of course, may be denied. It may be said that man needs no religion, that it is but a passing phase nearly over, and that we have at length entered on the positive epoch, as described by Comte. Comte, however, it must never be forgotten, was driven to crystallize into a religious system that enthusiasm for humanity which he desiderated, making, as has been said, a sort of parody of the Roman Church. So far as can be judged by observation, however, it seems improbable that either the agnostic or the purely rationalist scheme will satisfy the mass of men, but only a few who live under conditions highly artificial and many who do not reflect at all. Nor do I deny the extreme difficulty of the

fundamental faith of the Christian in Love, as Lord of all things. The doctrine of the Fatherhood of God, to which some would fain reduce Christianity, in the hope of making it easy and universal, is to me the profoundest of all stumbling blocks. Looking at the world of today, with its masses of blighted lives and amazing wastefulness, not only of happiness, but of character, it is hard indeed to credit the saying that there is a heavenly Father "without whom no sparrow falls to the ground." Plausible grounds may be adduced for treating all known existence, the history of the world as we have it, as a mere effort of "the will to power," blind and conscientious. Nietzsche's doctrine is much more than the ravings of a lunatic, and at times threatens to overwhelm the strongest. At other times the view of things propounded by another philosopher, Mr. Bertrand Russell, that it is mere purposeless vanity, seems to come to me with a force well-nigh irresistible. Certainly no one can prove it false. Let me read the eloquent words in which he proclaims it. It is from *The Religion of the Free Man*.

"Such in outline, but even more purposeless, more void of meaning, is the world which Science presents for our belief. Amid such a world, if anywhere, our ideals henceforward must find a home. That Man is the product of causes which had no prevision of the end they were achieving; that his origin, his growth, his hopes and fears, his loves and his beliefs are but the outcome of accidental collocations of atoms; that no fire, no heroism, no intensity of thought and feeling can preserve an individual life beyond the grave; that all the labour of the ages, all the devotion, all the inspiration, all the noonday brightness of human genius are destined to extinction in the vast death of the solar system, and that the whole temple of Man's achievement must inevitably be buried beneath the débris of a universe in ruins — all these things, if not quite beyond dispute, are yet so nearly certain that no philosophy which rejects them can hope to stand. Only within the scaffolding of these truths, only on the firm foundation of unyielding despair, can the 'soul' habitation henceforth be safely built."

"How, in such an alien and inhuman world, can so powerless a creature as Man preserve his aspirations untarnished? A strange mystery it is that Nature, omnipotent but blind, in the revolutions of her secular hurrying through the abysses of space, has brought forth at last a child, subject still to her power, but gifted with sight, with knowledge of good and evil, with the capacity of judging all the works of his unthinking Mother. In spite of Death the mark and seal of parental control, Man is yet free, during his brief years, to examine, criticise, to know, and in imagination to create. To him alone, in the world with which he is acquainted, this freedom belongs; and in this lies his superiority to the resistless forces that control his outward life."

"Brief and powerless is Man's life; on him and all his race that slow, sure doom falls pitiless and dark. Blind to good and evil, reckless of destruction, omnipotent matter rolls on its relentless way; for Man, condemned today to lose his dearest, tomorrow himself to pass through the gate of darkness, it remains only to cherish, ere

yet the blow falls, the lofty thoughts that ennoble his little day; disdaining the coward terrors of the slave of Fate, to worship at the shrine that his own hands have built; undismayed by the empire of Chance, to preserve a mind free from the wanton tyranny that rules his outward life; proudly defiant of the irresistible forces that tolerate, for a moment, his knowledge and his condemnation, to sustain alone, a weary but unyielding Atlas, the world that his own ideals have fashioned despite the trampling march of unconscious power."

Now what destroys such doctrines is not demonstration. They cannot be demonstrated to be false, or else why should Mr. Russell believe them? Their true antagonist is always faith, the faith that, however bad things may appear, reality cannot be so hopeless as that would make it. Life cannot be such a senseless tragedy as all that. Just as the supreme argument for immortality is the spectacle of some strong and noble character, dying in early life — for we feel that all cannot be over with it — so against the sight of nature and all

her cruelties, what is there to be said except that human hearts will not acquiesce in a world whose sole meaning is that it has none? This is the final ground of all religious belief, whether Christian or not. As Mr. Bradley puts it in regard to his philosophy:

"Is it after all a paradox that our conceptions tend all more or less to be one-sided, and that life as a whole is something higher and something truer than those fragmentary ideas, by which we seek to express and formulate it? Is it after all the man who is most consistent who on the whole attains to greatest truth? To most, if not to all of us, I should have thought that there came moments when it seemed clear that the Universe is too much everywhere for our understanding. Any truth of ours, no matter what, fails to contain the entirety of that which it tries to embrace, and hence is falsified by the reality. . . . *If I were not convinced of* [*this*] *on the ground of metaphysics, I should still believe it upon instinct. And, though I am willing to concede that my metaphysics may be wrong, there is, I think, nothing*

which could persuade me that my instinct is not right."[8]

"The immanence of the Absolute in finite centres, and of finite centres in the Absolute, I have always set down as inexplicable. Those to whom philosophy has to explain everything need therefore not trouble themselves with it."[8]

This refusal is an act of faith. It cannot be consciously justified to those who will not make it. Yet, I think, it may be said to be involved as a presupposition of all purposeful activity.[9] And it also will carry us on to some view of ultimate reality, which makes it at least analogically personal. We cannot rest in the belief that the world as a whole is lacking in those personal relations which are the reality of life here, and without which the eternal home is no home. We demand imperiously the hope of intimacy with the secret of all things; and intimacy means to us communion, the mutual love of spirits, and this intimacy between the derived and the original Spirit is only another way of expressing the Fatherhood of God.

I spoke of faith as the supreme argument against the difficulty raised by the apparent waste and cruelty of the world. There is another — the authority of Jesus. His unbroken trust in His Father gives us warrant even stronger than that sense of which I have been speaking. This authority is to many of us a support when our own persuasion seems breaking. It is said that this doctrine is the sum total of the Christian Faith; that as the teaching of Jesus, it is sufficient; that all the supernatural elements may be omitted or relegated to a secondary place. This it was His mission to proclaim. This involves no difficulties and no assertion of the miraculous. Yet in that case, what is the use of it? If the doctrine of Jesus was a mere surmise, it is no better than yours or mine, and can be to us no support at times, when "all melts under our feet." Jesus' doctrine of the Heavenly Father might be only one more beautiful dream, were it not for that in Jesus which enabled Him to speak securely. If He were not raised above that conjectural quagmire in which we "follow wandering fires," why should we trust in what He

tells us? The difficulties of belief are at times so tremendous that you cannot hold the truth even of the Fatherhood of God without a view of Jesus, as beyond man, which leads right on to the Creeds. And so the question at the last comes back to the same point: Whom say ye that Jesus is? What is the total impression of Jesus on mankind? And how are we to set forth our relation to it? Can we find any method more adequate than the Faith adumbrated in the Creeds and lived by the Church, of which they are an element?

As we saw at the outset, it is altogether a fallacious method to treat the question as though it were all concerned with documents. There is no reason for studying documents of this or any other matter *in vacuo*. It is always something in our life here and now that drives us to that study. We shall never get right even educationally till we begin history at the right end, which is today; not 1066, or 476, or 753, or any other arbitrary date. The ground for enquiry into the past must be the present or the future. That is what starts us off. Above all in regard to this

question of questions, I ask myself, How am I to interpret certain living facts, the Christian Church here, myself now speaking, and the general philosophic chaos, which is only one aspect of the more universal human muddle? I am not as a Christian professing a belief in Christ as one who once lived. It is no far-off memory of one who told of God, but the sharing in a new life, which is nourished by union with one alive. Nor, on the other hand, do I adhere solely to a present society, energising in His name. That society has its credentials, which are submitted to scrutiny. Nor again is it only in the figure of Christ, nor in the Church as a community for winning holiness, nor in its history as authentic, nor in its miracles as facts, but because all these are a source of peace and strength to me — me a loving, sinning, choosing being. Nor again is it because there are no historical perplexities and no difficulties for thought that I accept what I do, but I find that every other alternative is even worse; that it either ignores material facts and pretends to escape difficulties, which in reality it enhances; or

from having a lower ideal it preaches a view of things too horrible to be endured, save on a compulsion which it does not prove; or that it frankly gives up the problem as hopeless. And none of these positions but seem to me on the whole less tenable than the Christian. All these arguments for faith, positive and negative alike, come with an accumulated force, which seems to me so tremendous that I incline very strongly to accept them. Moreover, the total character of the Christian story seems to me so strongly to point to an irruption into this world of powers from that beyond, that short of compulsion I hesitate to reject it.

And so the question must be put. Do we know enough of reality to pronounce *a priori* as incredible such a narrative as that of the Gospels, supported as it is by the statements of the Epistles, actualised in the Church and the individual of today? On this point enough has already been said and I need not labour it further.

No bigotry is more intense and less amenable to evidence than that dogmatism which, while proclaiming man's ignorance of

the secret of things, asserts also that he knows enough of that secret to declare that it could not communicate itself through Jesus Christ. I grant the difficulties involved in the extreme views of God's power to limit Himself, which the Incarnation implies, but to deny that it was possible is pure assumption and springs from a Pagan view of God, as essentially proud. I grant the difficulties of Christian theology, but it does guard its supreme treasure, the supernatural, and God's entry into human life in Christ Jesus. Once satisfied of the generally supra-normal character of the Gospel narrative, I find it the part of wisdom to put myself into living union with the society which makes that belief active.

By such admission we are in face of stupendous mysteries. Nor can human language ever be adequate to set them out. The teaching of S. Paul on the Atonement and the person of Christ, and of S. John on the mystical union and the Sacraments, and the whole atmosphere of the early Church is crowded with mystery. So am I. These things are congruous with our sense of wonder in the world and in our

own life. That a world so strange as this should have as its core a secret so marvellous as that revealed in the Cross and Passion and Rising again of Jesus, is to me but natural. What does seem to me false to that reality in which I live is the clear daylight of naturalism, or the articulated scheme of rationalist thought. All views of the world end in mystery — and an act of faith. In agnosticism there is no light at all. Pantheism, with its pathetic confidence in an ever incomprehensible Absolute, its denial of true personality, and its failure to explain the delusion of it, seems to me, despite obvious attractions, less credible and less true to the facts of life, while even fuller of mystery. The Christian Faith, with its teaching of God as Love, and therefore as Father and Saviour, and of human life as redeemable and as seen through the Resurrection glory, if it does not solve all mysteries, leaves us more hopeful than any other. Theology, so far as it errs, does so by over-rationalising rather than by profaning its mysteries. But it does its work so long as it preserves the sense of the stupendous nature of those

doings in Palestine and their refusal to be classed in the ordinary categories.

Again we have admitted, and it was the purpose of the last lecture to emphasize, the fact of the vast differences between the mental climate of the Christian Church and that of our own day. Any acceptance of the Faith as supernatural, even allowing for much that is local and transitory in form of expression, involves us in great difficulties, for it invites us to breathe a different atmosphere. It is this sense of the difference of climate that forms to many the insurmountable obstacle. But it is not in reality such, except on the assumption that ours is altogether superior and that the other contains no valuable ingredients which we lack. On grounds stated in the first part of our discussion I am driven to reject these assumptions. Despite our vaunted enlightenment, the mental habits of our own day appear to me curiously superficial. Whole tracts of the life of the spirit are to them a *terra incognita.* If certain dominant tendencies continue unchecked, we should soon be even in worse case, for these tendencies will stamp

out certain inherited counter-tendencies, which linger on and have still some influence. The point is, that the world needs and is crying out for some way of escape from that intellectual prison house which it has built for itself. Such a way of escape is offered by the Gospel of Christ, and that which seems to outsiders its foolishness is in reality the very wisdom for which they are seeking. It holds the *open sesame* into a larger world, the talisman of a life freer and less sophisticated than that of the atmosphere of present day intellectualism. It lifts us from the dry bones of theory to the abounding life of the Spirit. It is indeed a magic which relieves our minds, tired with the riddle of things, and introduces us to a world where we are free.

For it is indeed mainly our own theories of things that we have to reconcile with the presuppositions of Christianity. The spectacle of man as a free and sinful spirit, and his inner knowledge of the tragedy of himself, the picture of God as Father and Saviour, the philosophy of suffering as revealed in the Cross, the Sacramental gift at once natural and supernatural —

all this, if hard to reconcile with speculative theories, is congruous with life as it is daily lived. It is only when we set up our modern categories, useful for certain aspects of life, and put them between us and real experience, that we find the difficulties insuperable. A child's laughter or a woman's tears make short work of all such phantasms of the spirit. The Gospel is the freshest and most original thing in the world, while the tone of modern intellectualism, with all its culture, is at bottom commonplace and middle aged.

Of course these things are mere presumptions. They may lessen the difficulties to faith in one who desires it. They are not conclusive. Nothing is. No man who is honest but echoes at times the reply of Dr. Johnson to Boswell, who declared there was quite enough evidence — "Sir, I could wish for more." God leaves us free to take what view of life we please. Against our will we shall not be driven even "to the truth as it is in Jesus." The argument most nearly conclusive is the atmosphere of the New Testament and its congruity with our own experience. It is the constant pouring in of that atmosphere upon the

mind of a man, persuaded alike of his own failure and the world's need of redemption, that is most likely to bring him to the foot of the Cross. For that is where we all have at last to come. Christ does not reveal Himself to those who are satisfied. Why should He? They do not want Him. It is only as a man is ready to cry, "What must I do to be saved?" that the answer will come, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."

For that is what it all means. I have spoken of the Church and her history, nor could I set forth strongly enough my hope that men would enter into that great fellowship. I have spoken of her actual power today in the social perplexities of to-day, and I feel more and more the need of a society that has an other-worldly reference, whose very existence is a protest against materialist ideals. I have spoken of the appeal to the individual, his power to find himself in the Church. This individual reference must never be left out, the mystic is the deepest of all apologists; and no social authority can do away with the sense

of the individual member. But all these things have for the Christian no meaning apart from Him from whom they took their origin. Neither the history, nor the present life of the Church, nor her Sacraments, nor the individual's consciousness of grace could stand for one moment, but for their reference to Him. It is in Him, as He hangs upon the Cross, "the dear dying Lamb" in whom we see the human face of God. He calls all men unto Him, lifted on that tree of agony, which is His enduring throne.

The quest of any man is the quest of reality. It may be more vigorous and conscious at such times as this at college, but it never ceases. Man is so made that he cannot be satisfied with less than the highest, and that he must be beaten down before he can be raised up. The pursuit of self cannot be carried on alone; it is self, as at home in God, that we seek. We find ourselves only in finding Him. There in Him who bade men die to live is the crown of all our striving; there is the Love that redeems our tragic failure, the peace that passeth all understanding—Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today, and for ever.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX

I

King Richard the Third and the Reverend James Thompson

Some fifteen years ago Sir Clements Markham set himself to rehabilitate Richard Crookback. His effort was not the first, for Horace Walpole a century before had tried his hand at the same task. The work was done so skilfully that any member of the general public who had sufficient interest to read the articles would easily have succumbed to the advocate. Briefly, the case was as follows. The writers who have made history were all of them directly or indirectly subservient to Henry VII, who needed for his stability to inculcate detestation of the man whom he had supplanted. This bias animated historical writers consciously and popular opinion unconsciously. For reasons of this sort Fabyan is worthless. Polydore Vergil, historiographer to Henry VII, was an Italian and was not likely to tell any truth unpalatable to his master even if he had known. The life of Richard by Sir Thomas More has not really the weight of his character behind, but was written or inspired

by Cardinal Morton, the engineer of the Tudor triumph, and implacably hostile to Richard.

After thus clearing the ground by destroying the credit of the witnesses, the critic examined the individual crimes attributed to Richard. He laboured the inadequacy of the evidence for the Duke's share in the murder of the young Prince of Wales after Tewkesbury. For his supposed murder of King Henry VI in the Tower, the course advised by Mr. Weller was adopted and an alibi set up. The story of the killing of "false, fleeting, perjured Clarence" was dismissed as unworthy of credence.

After this preliminary exculpation the accused is led into court with clean hands and there tried for his final and worst offences, the usurpation of the Crown and the subsequent murder in the Tower of the two princes. So far from being an educated Renaissance villain, Richard is shewn as a rather nice man, capable like others of crimes, but averse from them. The whole moral atmosphere of that time

> "Which hovered between war and wantonness
> And crownings and dethronements."

is conveniently ignored throughout the discussion.

The plea set up for the assumption of the Crown is reviewed. It is alleged that Richard was no usurper, but the true heir. He was shocked to find from Bishop Stillington the evidence of an earlier marriage of his brother, which reduced the little princes into bastards. Thus Richard was not the

wicked uncle, but the lawful inheritor; i.e., if Warwick was held to be barred by his father Clarence's attainder.

But this is not all. Not only did Richard not usurp the throne. He did not even make away with his nephews. He left them alive. They were murdered by Henry VII, or at least at his orders. For it was his interest to marry the daughter of Elizabeth Woodville, and as this left the legitimacy of the princes once more clear, it was needful to get rid of them. Now the character of that rather unattractive Machiavellian statesman is not such as to make the story hard of belief. We should have no difficulty about it if there were any tradition or writing in its favour. Moreover, it is noteworthy that the Act of Attainder passed against Richard does not mention this assassination, and this is not very easily accounted for, except by the hypothesis that the little princes were still alive at the moment the act was passed. Against all this there is, on the one hand, the evidence of popular tradition and all our writers, and on the other the testimony of one witness who must have been disinterested. The French Chancellor, at the States-General in 1484, with Richard still reigning, openly denounced him as the murderer of his nephews and assumed the widespread knowledge of the fact. This difficulty was removed by Mr. Markham in the following way. He pointed out that Morton was peculiarly active in France and suggested that he had inspired the Chancellor, not only with the belief that Richard

had murdered the children, but also with the belief that there was in England a common rumour to that effect, whereas, as a matter of fact, there was nothing of the sort.

Despite the ingenuity of this argument — and it is far more plausible than much of the critical constructions of a non-miraculous Gospel — it has failed to win acceptance. Dr. Gairdner, whose knowledge of the sources was unrivalled, not only refused to be persuaded, but declared that such methods as those employed were "an end of all history." So far as I am aware, no single historical student has declared in favour of the new theory.

The controversy is, however, of great interest, for it raises the whole question of normal historical beliefs. Further, it serves to illustrate how woefully we may go astray if we isolate each document or fact and consider them apart from the total picture and from popular tradition. For indeed it is a strange chance, if Richard had been the "plaister-saint" he becomes on the new theory, how all evidence of such a character should have vanished. It is also to be noted that this whole series of crimes was attributed, not to different people, but to the same individual, placed amid alluring temptations and living in an age when bloodshed was a daily occurrence and the influence of the later Renaissance was operating to undermine the moral basis of society. In the time of such flowers of the moral life as Tiptoft or Rodrigo Borgia, such deeds are far from incredible for a

prince in a position which has proved too strong for many a more virtuous character. Nor can we account for all these crimes as the creation of prejudice or ill-feeling, even though it may be that one or two of the narratives have undergone appropriate development; nor is it really an argument against the traditional story that it formed the basis of a play of Shakespeare. The real difficulty lies in the total impression and the universal tradition. Of course all this might be the fruit of Tudor calumny; at least the contrary must be proved. But to a mind not resolved *a priori* to discard the common tradition such an explanation seems too far fetched to be probable. Thus it can be seen how, even in a case like this, any sound historical judgment must take into account not only the documents, but also the common tradition, while it must treat not merely of the facts in isolation, but the total picture, of which they are elements.

The same is the case with other characters, such as the Emperor Tiberius or Pope Alexander VI. Efforts have been made to destroy the belief in the trustworthiness of the traditional view, but without any real success, and with slight changes in detail the portrait remains as it was.

Further, it is not to be doubted that even in regard to the most thoroughly "documented" of historical facts tradition plays a large part in our belief. Creighton said somewhere that apart from tradition there was not sufficient evidence to prove that Julius Cæsar ever lived, and the same fact is

proved indirectly by the famous theory of Huet in the seventeenth century. In the interests of the Papacy, Huet argued that there never had taken place any Councils before that of Trent; i.e., that the whole of Church history was a fiction. In our own day the same was contended from an opposite standpoint by the late Mr. Johnson. He held that the whole of history from 500 to 1500 was imaginary, the deliberate creation of the monastic orders, and to get over certain obvious difficulties he presumed that, where there was other than Christian authority, that was due to a similar fiction on the part of Mohammedan monks. I quote these cases, not for any value in the theories, but as proof of the difficulties that face any enquirer who is resolved to jettison tradition from all historical beliefs.

II

This is the first impression made upon the reader by Mr. Thompson's book on *Miracles in the New Testament.*[1] The age-long faith of Christendom goes for nothing. In his view the consciousness of the Church creates not even a presumption in favour of any single interpretation — indeed the presumption is rather the other way. Now it might not be accurate to say that, critically speaking, the Church tradition affords more than a presumption. But that it affords less is not so much a surrender of any conception of Divine guidance in the religious society, but it is false to the first

principles of forming the most ordinary historical judgments. In starting to write a life of Bossuet, for instance, I cannot divest myself of those impressions about the *grand siècle* that have lived themselves into the mind of cultivated Europe and have been slowly infusing their meaning into me since the days when I read Voltaire's history before I went to a public school. I approach the topic through a whole world of presuppositions, sentiments, and imaginings, which have built themselves into a picture with very little of conscious construction on my part. True, when the evidence is mastered, in some respects the current tradition will be modified and my appreciation of its meaning will be deeper. But tradition is rarely at fault in regard to the main lineaments of any character who held the stage, and it ought always to be taken into account even by a writer who desires to set up a different view. As a matter of fact the vast development of historical investigation in the nineteenth century has not greatly altered our judgments, though it has deepened our knowledge and modified it in detail, in regard to any of the great public men. Henry VIII, Queen Elizabeth, Charles I and his sons, Marlborough, Joseph II, Richelieu, Frederic the Great, Maria Teresa do not loom so very differently to us from what they did to our grandfathers, however greatly we have deepened our acquaintance with the social and political conditions of their life.

However that may be, no historian ought to

approach the study of any well known historical personage without taking into account the traditional portrait and treating it as at least having a very strong presumption in its favour. Or else how did it arise? For this is where he begins. He starts from that notion of the character which has become universal, which is impressed upon the mind rather by suggestion and feeling than by direct statement and is a presupposition of the very motive which drives him to criticise.

Now in regard to the miracles, and still more in regard to those of them enshrined in the Creeds, the tradition of the Christian Church affords at least as valuable a help as does the popular judgment of a king or a soldier. Yet from Mr. Thompson's book one would scarcely know that it existed, and might almost suppose that these narratives were some newly constructed hypotheses which a revolutionary school of theologians were trying to bolster up by a non-natural use of the documents. I do not say that the consciousness of the Church in a matter of this kind is infallible; certainly it cannot be assumed to be so beforehand. But I do say, as Professor Denney said, that the very institution of Sunday is a standing evidence, too frequently ignored, of the fact that the Church is built upon the faith that on the first day of the week the Lord rose again leaving an empty grave.

The question of our Lord's miracles cannot be decided by discussing them in isolation. First of

all we must have some view of the narrative as a whole. Now Mr. Thompson does not profess to do this, although, as I shall indicate, he really does write with his mind made up as to what cannot have happened. At any rate he never discusses the problem about the total character of the impression made upon us by the documents — whether it does not present us with features that are supernatural. As I have urged in the text, the total massive impression of the New Testament narratives seems to me so strong and so wonderful that, unless I were hindered by irresistible prejudice, I should say that we have here to do with events in a high degree mysterious, with what has all the marks of an irruption of influences from the spirit-world into that of sense, producing, as might well be anticipated, amazing disturbances. For if there be a spirit-world behind this and it has relations with ours — if even what Mr. Thompson somewhat inconsistently admits be true, then that these results of such a unique fact should be strange, abnormal, miraculous is only natural.

I believe that this conclusion can be sustained even if we take the Synoptics alone, or S. John, or the Epistles of S. Paul; though on the grounds stated I do not believe that this separation is legitimate, or even that we have any real right to separate the evidence of the New Testament from the continuing life of the Church and its power today in the individual experience. For we must bear in mind that one well-attested conversion or one

specifically Christianised life outweighs as positive evidence the existence of a thousand unbelievers or Pagans, precisely as one well-authenticated ghost story is positive evidence about a spirit-world, which would not be destroyed by proving a hundred other stories to be figments. Speaking as one who has been concerned in historical studies for more than twenty years, I say that it would take a great deal more argument than any I have yet come across to convince me of the untruth of the general character of the New Testament. The impression, which deepens on every reading, is quite plain — like a flash of light — that I hold here the record of a spiritual experience which speaks from the world beyond and has produced profound and unusual disturbance in the physical universe. This seems to my apprehension the plain fact; a fact made more patent by its after-results and to be accepted, like other facts, whatever general scheme of notions a man adheres to. It matters not for this purpose whether a man be idealist, realist, sceptic, intellectualist, pragmatist, here he has to do with a genuine outbreak from the world beyond, and he must harmonise the fact of that outbreak with his system or change it as best he may.

Personally it seems to me that the Creeds and the Church are but the expression of that fact, are indeed part of it, and on grounds stated above, it is the whole fact that is the real living thing; the details are but abstractions, and it is to that whole fact, as the expression of "God in Christ reconcil-

ing the world unto Himself," that my adhesion is given and by which I obtain "the fellowship of the mystery."

III

Let us, however, pass from this topic and consider the treatment which Mr. Thompson gives to the documents, how the first and most notable feature of his treatment is that he nowhere gives any serious reflection to the total impression created by the documents as a whole. We shall never get a true view either of a character, an epoch, or a book if we seek first for the details and, adding up our impressions, produce the result as a sort of addition sum. Fancy judging a Keats' sonnet by the first four lines or *Esmond* by three chapters taken at random. It is the whole which makes a work of life or of art. On that we must have some provisional view before we proceed to analysis of details. It is now recognised by psychologists that this is the way in which the mind works; it starts from a vaguely defined continuum and proceeds to split it up into objects. So we have to do with our historical judgments as with our literary. First of all we must frame for ourselves some general impression as to the man, the epoch, or the book with which we are dealing, and then proceed to deepen, to correct, and to define this impression more precisely by a closer study of detail. The whole comes before the parts in this as in any living thing.

Here it is the total fact that has the character of miracle. It is there that we obtain that irresistible impression of witnessing an invasion of this world by powers from that beyond — a view which is only inadmissible provided the world as we see it be self-explanatory and complete. If this be not so, we cannot rule out beforehand the supernatural character of the Christian fact, and it is as parts of this alleged supernatural fact that the miracles are to be considered. They are not single and unrelated marvels, and yet that is the way in which criticism of this sort habitually treats them.

Let us take two instances of this unbiassed criticism. The narratives of the first two chapters of S. Luke are well known, and their internal solidarity is the most obvious feature. Mr. Thompson, however, will have none of this, and following Prof. Kirsopp Lake, endeavours, by splitting them into pieces, to shew that the story of the miraculous birth forms no integral part. It is a later addition. There is no ground in the MSS. for this assertion, and hence its sole support is the prepossession of the writer against any abnormal occurrence. I quote his words:

"But probably the best solution of the difficulties of the passage is to suppose that the four words *ἐπεί ἄνδρα οὐ γινώσκω*, without which there would be no obscurity and no suggestion of the Virgin Birth in the Gospel, are either a modification of S. Luke's source, introduced by the Evangelist himself, as editor, or a later addition

to the text of Luke by some person or congregation who wished to make the miracle quite clear. There is no textual authority for doubting the words. But we know that editorial modifications are a common feature of the Gospel. And we have no reason, unfortunately, to suppose that even the best texts which we possess are free from interpolations." [2]

It is not easy to treat this objection seriously — it can obviously have no weight at all save to a mind resolved beforehand to find some way out of the clear testimony of the Gospel.

One more instance will witness to the sanity and balance of this criticism. The narrative of the feeding of the five thousand occurs in all four Gospels. If the writer's view be sound that the miracle of the four thousand is only a variant, this only proves how widespread was the story. Clearly, it formed part of the very earliest tradition. Nor can it be dismissed by a manipulation of the MSS. The author, however, finds no difficulty. Following M. Loisy he pronounces it to be a Eucharistic myth. It had better be given in his own words.

"But probably the most valuable clue to the meaning of the narrative is supplied by the institution of the Eucharist in the Early Church. Suppose an original incident, the exact nature of which we cannot now determine, but which must have been remarkable enough to impress itself upon the memory of the apostles, to be compared with the stories of the Old Testament prophets (I Kings

xvii. 8–16; 2 Kings iv. 42–44), and to be regarded at a comparatively early date as a miracle. This incident may have been transformed, by the pious imagination of a later generation, into the original institution of the Agapê and Eucharist. Then the account of it would be assimilated to the actual experience of Christian worship. At the Eucharist, which might sometimes be held out of doors, and at which the congregation would naturally be arranged in groups, Jesus Himself was still present among His friends; still, as Head of the Family of the faithful, blessed and brake the bread; still miraculously satisfied the utmost needs of all who came. Further, it was natural to think that, if He had performed this symbolic act once in Jewish territory, He must have done it again among the Gentiles; and thus the alternative tradition of the Feeding of the Four Thousand found ready admission to the Gospel.[3]

"It is difficult to see why, unless there was some such ecclesiastical motive for its preservation, the story of this miracle should have appeared six times in the Gospels, and always with such an amount of detail. The fact that it is so often described is not a sign that the Evangelists were particularly sure that it happened, but rather that it was particularly appropriate to the needs of those for whom they wrote."

Further argument is hardly needed with explanations like this ready to hand. It would be equally feasible to interpret the whole Gospel

narrative, in the method once fashionable, as a sun-myth. For no conceivable phenomenon, however unusual, but might be trimmed into normal categories by methods so drastic and subjective. Of course this exegesis can have no weight except for those who are resolved beforehand to reject all that is abnormal.

That is indeed the spirit of the book. True it is that the writer refrains from denying the abstract possibility of miracles, but this exception is purely verbal. On page 5 we find him saying "To admit a miracle is to commit intellectual suicide." When an academic writer begins an unbiassed enquiry with a dictum of that kind, we can predict pretty readily what conclusions he will come to. More significant even than this statement is the remark in the course of his reply in *The Guardian* that "the amount of evidence which exists for miracles is itself the proof that they never happened." To argue with a writer who takes up a position like this is obviously out of the question. It is a case of heads I win, tails you lose. If the evidence is slight or a little confused we are to withhold our belief because there is too little; if it be incontrovertible we are still to withhold it because there is too much. This truly amazing sentence is a *reductio ad absurdum* of his whole argument.[4] That argument, however, with the discussion which it has aroused, will have served a good purpose if it avails once more to bring out the well known fact that the question of the abnormal in his-

tory is at bottom philosophical or theological and can never be decided by the documents alone. It all depends on the attitude of mind with which you approach it. One would have thought that all this had been sufficiently established by the classical work on Miracles (ignored by Mr. Thompson), Mozley's *Bampton Lectures*. That all depends on our previous attitude is demonstrated over and over again by the writer, in spite of himself, in phrases like those quoted, and others, and in his preference of a vast quantity of ingenious theories to the clear meaning of the New Testament and the whole tradition of the Church. And indeed it is very commonly recognised — by friend and foe alike. A friend of mine once said to me, "*It is not a question of evidence, it is a question of taste, and the taste for miracle has gone out.*" That is the modern attitude. Only I deny the statement. True of the last generation it is less and less true of our own. Recent knowledge of faith-healing, thought-transference, and the well established cases of "ecstatics" and "levitation" are bringing back once more that habit of mind which can approach strange occurrences without ruling them out beforehand by some appeal to laws of nature, or to what is, or is not, conceivable. Mr. Thompson's remarks about the "walking on the water" and the nature miracles savour rather of the "brave days" of Professor Tyndall than of anything we have now. Thus it appears to me to be an entire mistake when Mr. Thompson speaks of criticism as though it

were a purely independent science and could establish certain conclusions universally acceptable. For the moment you pass beyond the range of the normal, everything depends on your previous attitude towards the supernatural. According as your general view is favourable or unfavourable to it, so must you approach the evidence. If you believe or consider it probable that we are surrounded by living spirits who may influence this world and know more about it than we do, you cannot fail to approach the evidence in a very different spirit from one who believes such powers to be non-existent or so highly improbable as to be practically negligible. This distinction is seen daily in the different approach made towards ghost-stories, and I suppose by some even in regard to thought-transference or mind-cure. Does anyone suppose that Prof. Ray Lankester and Sir Oliver Lodge, both of them eminent scientific enquirers, would be likely to agree as to the results of a dozen meetings of the Society of Psychical Research?

So in regard to the New Testament. Not all, but a great deal of our view will depend on whether we hold a belief in regard to the other world akin to that of S. John or S. Paul or whether we start by ruling out of court with M. Seignobos all miraculous narratives because we think it a principle of historical criticism that "miracles do not happen"! The truth is that any hope of a general agreement in regard to narratives dealing with events which on the face of them are supra-normal is a chimera. It

is as little likely to be realized as a universal theistic belief based on the alleged irrefragable proofs. If they are intellectually coercive, how is it that so many reflecting persons are unconvinced by them? In history, as in philosophy or theology, there is no likelihood of a compulsive certainty based on the documents alone and apart from faith. The evidence may be enough to confirm a waverer or puzzle a doubter, but it never was and never will be enough of itself to convince a determined unbeliever in the other world, and by its very nature it cannot be, because it is always possible for the sceptic to say, with Hume, that some form of self-delusion is more probable than the truth of the narrative.[5]

Now it is this general attitude towards the other world that is the most startling feature of this book. It comes out most clearly in the writer's attitude towards the Fourth Gospel. It is well known that even some Unitarian scholars hold to a belief in Christ, as the Incarnate Logos, who are yet unable to accept the miracles. But of this Mr. Thompson will have none. He complains of the "intellectual inadequacy" of the Gospel and lays bare his feeling in his attitude towards the prologue. He describes its aim correctly enough, but only to reject it.

"The fourth Gospel begins with a supernaturalistic account of the Incarnation. This it propounds in the prologue, stating (with a deliberate parallelism of expression to the opening of the Jewish Bible) that the story of Jesus is the story of the entrance

into the world under ordinary conditions of space and time of the Eternal Word of God. Pre-existent with God, He had been God's agent in the creation of the world, which now He visited and revivified, as the Source of all spiritual life and light." A little further on he adds: "To sum up, the aim of the fourth Gospel is to place the timeless, spaceless person of the Word of God into the narrow conditions of time and place in which Jesus of Nazareth lived and died. This can be done in faith without damage to either side of the antinomy. It cannot be done in history without a weakening either of the humanity or of the divinity of Christ."

Thus, in Mr. Thompson's view, the whole doctrine of the Logos and *any belief in the pre-existence of our Lord* is a product of superstition. Thus he throws over with one wave of the hand the view of one who understood the Gospel if any man ever did (Bishop Westcott) "The Unchangeable sum of Christianity is the message"—"The Word was God and the Word became flesh," while it would reduce to ruins the greater part of the confession of the other great critic, Dr. Hort, as expressed in his famous Hulsean Lectures on *The Way, the Truth, and the Life.* It is not easy to see what remains of the theology of the Incarnation if this view be accepted, although it must be allowed that at the close certain phrases not very consistent with the writer's main position are introduced implying that our Lord as the perfect result of evolution is to be worshipped as God. This

point is of importance because in most of the discussion the significance of this part of the work seems to have been overlooked. Certainly it shews that the writer is far more at variance with Christian theology than some of his defenders have claimed.

Here in similar passages the true drift of the book is revealed. It is the total mentality of the writer, so far as it can be judged, that is far more repugnant to me than any of his treatment of details. Except in the form of a Pantheistic Nature-worship, I see no real loophole for any belief in a supernatural world.

IV

As I have said in the text, the question of miracles is really the question of the existence of a transcendent world. Does there exist behind the veil a Being or beings of spiritual nature with knowledge and powers more than human and able to influence our life in the world of sense? To deny this existence is to surrender the last vestige of the Christian doctrine of the other world. Yet if such beings have any relation at all with this life they must somehow or other cause that to happen which otherwise would not; and *vice versa*. When such events are normal in character we call them special providences. When they are not we call them miracles. In Balzac's story *La Peau de Chagrin* both are illustrated. When the hero's wishes are granted, so far as I recollect the form is never

miraculous. The result occurs by the providential ordering of normal occurrences. On the other hand, the shrinkage of the leather, which takes place instantaneously with each new use of his power, is definitely miraculous. It occurs as the direct result of his words without any intermediary. Now to suppose that there is beyond us a spiritual world, and that it either has no relation to this, or that it produces no effects other than normal, must be either to deny its character as free and personal or else to lay down that neither in knowledge nor power can it exceed ourselves. But it may produce effects of this kind; all recorded and, I think, all conceivable miracles could be brought under this category. I refuse to make the truly tremendous assumption that they never happen and never have happened — even apart from any of the stories that they actually did happen.

The current dislike to the miraculous is due to the marvellous triumphs of the mechanical method and to the faith that it is the sole means of knowledge. It is frequently due to a subtle form of materialism which, by asserting the supernatural significance of this world, conceives that it has saved the spiritual sense, whereas it has merely deified Nature. The whole point of our perplexities is not whether or no this life may have a spiritual meaning, but whether it contains any freedom or all is determined; and secondly whether this face of things we see, commonly called the natural world, is the whole of being,

or whether it be but a little bit and is surrounded by a vaster invisible universe peopled with personal spirits and functioning in ways different to ours.

Christianity stands for the latter view and always has stood for it, and when it be once admitted there is no real difficulty in regard to miracle. Of course, if we take Nature in the sense of Huxley or Mill, as equivalent to all that happens, then miracles are as natural as sparrows (both alike being mysterious). *No one supposes that a miracle is contrary to the nature of things*, and part of the ground for crediting them is that they are congruous with a God who created man and nature. The same is the case with the rather wearisome controversy about law. Miracles are not contrary to the law of the universe — it is unthinkable; they may be regarded as instances of a higher kind of life with its laws supervening upon a lower, just as man's free action by the law — i.e., the order — of his being can stop a cricket ball and "interfere" with the laws of gravitation. What we have experience of is the different kinds of nature, the mechanical, then the organic, the free activity of man, and finally there are rarely recognised occurrences which indicate beings of a higher order.

There is thus no objection to speak of miracles as instances of a higher result. Personally I am disposed to think the whole use of the term law is misleading, but there is not the smallest ground for any believer in miracles refusing to use the

term if he prefers it. Every fact that happens is to some extent new and individual, and a miracle is but an extreme instance of this. On the other hand, every fact that happens takes its place in a series — it is a bit of that great order of the world. The question is whether that order is personal or mechanical, for as M. Bergson so admirably shews, the idea of mere non-order is unthinkable; the only question is what kind of order we have to deal with. If the ultimate basis of all order be a God who is Love — i.e., who is personal and free — then such events as the Resurrection are in the highest degree natural, they are signs of that Eternal order; while the more nearly anything approaches to the purely mechanical, the more partial and abstract will it be. As a fact, the moment you come to real life you find mathematics gives but a very partial account of it, and of the most apparently mechanical facts, tells rather the tendency than the actual fact; for in Nature, as some one put it, we never find that 1 is 1, and that is the assumption of logic and mathematics. On this point I may refer to the work quoted in the text, Dr. Karl Pearson's *Grammar of Science*.

The contention of the Christian is that in the last resort all the order of things is personal. Moreover, since on this view God has created a number of free beings with a relative independence, there is always uncertainty in the universe. The opposite view is that, so far from this being the case, one might (theoretically) and may by-and-bye practi-

cally be able to predict the whole future of the universe both in gross and detail, because everything in it is mutually determined. At bottom this view denies the reality of change and freedom and treats the world as dead, i.e., given once for all, and working out a formula like a calculating machine. Between these two views there can never be anything but conflict, and the various attempts to soften determinism can none of them be pronounced successful. It is the cardinal question of freedom wherein lies the whole problem.

All this is left untouched by Mr. Thompson, who does not seem to have ever considered the bearing of his views on this topic. Others, however, do not leave it here. The doctrine of special providences is almost more repugnant to the popular sentiment even than that of miracles. For in the nature of things the former are more numerous and less unmistakable. Still more is this the case with freedom. Disbelievers in miracles almost invariably go on, as they logically ought, to a sheer determinism. This is indeed needful if they want one to get a clearly articulated scheme with the state of the world at any one moment as the mathematically deducible consequence of that preceding. It is because it conflicts with this that freedom is discredited, and with freedom, of course, the miraculous. That the two are bound up together is shewn by the following passage from Dr. McDougall's new book on *Body and Mind*. Arguing from a scientific standpoint for the existence of

the individual soul, he puts the current objection of what Sir Oliver Lodge would call "the orthodox man of science." These are his words:

"Under these conditions the working hypotheses of the natural sciences become confidently held doctrines from which we feel ourselves able to deduce the limits of the possible; and we seem able to rule out from our scheme of the universe all that confused crowd of obscure ideas which, under the names of magic, occultism, and mysticism, have been at war with science ever since it began to take shape as a system of verifiable ideas inductively established on an empirical basis. *Once admit on the one hand that psychical influences may interfere with the course of physical nature and "you don't know where you are"; you no longer can serenely affirm that miracles do not happen. They may happen at any moment and falsify the most confident predictions of physical science.*"

This book deserves to be widely known. It shews what are the living tendencies among students of natural science. At least some of the acutest minds are seen to be moving away (at this very moment, when Mr. Thompson develops an attack based on the notions of the last generation) from that monism, whether materialist or spiritualist, to which all events are mere changes in the one Being and miracles or new happenings and freedom or the existence of individuals are equally out of court. His work illustrates incidentally to the careful reader how closely connected are all three

notions: belief in God as a real personal agent, i.e., in a transcendent world; belief in miracle, i.e., in the livingness of the universe (on the other view it is merely a machine); belief in the true individuality, i.e., the soul of men and women. The publication of this book is a remarkable phenomenon. The writer has (I should suppose) no bias towards Christianity and he approaches the subject rather as a scientific observer than as a philosopher and shews the hopeless inadequacy of the popular doctrines of epiphenomenalism or psycho-physical parallelism to concatenate the actual facts of psychic life.

V

This passage of Dr. McDougall suggests one other element in that dislike of the miraculous which is so prevalent, an element not indiscernible in certain words of Mr. Thompson about the Sacraments and involved in his views of S. John. Miracles are corrupting to religion, for they imply a "magical" view of the nature of God. Now so far as I can see, this widespread objection has its roots in that Gnostic and Manichæan view of the material universe which regards it as something evil, and is at the bottom of all false asceticism and much of the Puritan view of life. It is the false spiritualism which flies from all contact with the outward world, which animates the Zwinglian attack on Sacramental grace, and is at the root of nearly all doctrines which deny the Incarnation. It is held to be some-

how degrading to God to hold that the regeneration of man should proceed partly by any means dependent on the outward world. Religion is inwardness and nothing else, and every material means is a bar. This is the basis of Zwinglianism; it is seen in all attempts to minimise the Incarnation, and it is now reaching its complete expression in the dislike and contempt for miracle. But if we look this difficulty in the face, we can at once see how unreal it is and largely dependent for its force on the unpleasant associations which many people call up in connection with the word "magic." If we are a world of spirits surrounded by a cloud of invisible witnesses, also spirits, and if these spirits act on this world at all, then so far as their actions produce results in the world of sense, they must be magical.

Besides, to assert the contrary is to deny the sacredness of outward things and to suppose that redemption is concerned with a part, not with the whole of life. I need not here labour the point that Christ on any Christian view came to effect redemption for the entire being of man — body no less than soul and spirit — and that it is a false abstraction to leave out one element. As Westcott says: "The Resurrection teaches not the immortality of the soul, but the immortality of the man." Now the magical view of the Incarnation asserts no more than that it is an Incarnation, the entrance into the condition of human life of the Eternal spirit; and how such an entrance is likely to be devoid of

disturbances in the material order, I know not. The magical view of the Sacraments merely asserts that God communicates Himself to us by the consecration of the simplest means of common life and emphasizes the "givenness" of grace in a way that none of the subjective theories which claim a higher spirituality can ever succeed in doing. The magical view of the world involved in the miraculous is simply the assertion that this life is not all; that it is encompassed by a spirit world beyond, and that that world can have influence over this, directly and not merely indirectly. How any believer in the life beyond can deny this, I cannot understand.

VI

Finally Mr. Thompson informs us, with that confident dogmatism which is a note of all his writing, that the mental conditions in which miracles were credible have vanished, and that they will never return. On the contrary, so far as I can judge, they very nearly did disappear in the last century, but they are coming back now, as hard as they can pelt. On all sides that hard crust of intellectualist orthodoxy is breaking up. The mechanical account of Nature is more and more seen to be abstract and partial. We see on every hand the collapse of the heroic efforts to force on to the Procrustean bed of purely physical and mathematical method even those branches of natural science which are concerned with life; while the attempt to stretch human life,

still more art and religion on this bed, is daily exhibiting its futility; it always gives a plausible explanation, but it does so by omitting the one important element which makes the difference. It is not with science, but with the mechanical theory of the world, that the belief in miracles conflicts — with that view which, treating causation as the category of identity applied to time, finds nothing in the effects really new, and by implication denies the life of things, the reality of change. Prof. J. A. Thompson, whose scientific distinction is unquestioned, asks, Is there one science of Nature? He argues that the moment you come to the problem of life, you pass beyond any possible mechanical explanation and proceeds to quote very eminent authorities on his side, such as Dr. J. S. Haldane, Driesch, and Joly.

Sir Oliver Lodge, whom I quote in the text, affords a further instance. In history we look back with a smile on Buckle's attempt to force the whole of human life into a formula of inevitable development; and sometime back a protest justified by the evidence was made on the danger of overemphasizing the element of continuity. But this is not all. The moment you pass beyond the normal you find a well established body of knowledge, quite inexplicable by any mechanical means. Mr. Thompson appears to think that those of our Lord's miracles concerned with disease cease to be such by calling them cases of mind-cure. But neither

mind-cure nor thought-transference are really explicable on the mechanical theory. We now know that mind-cures exist and have begun to classify them, but they remain beyond interpretation, except as the free exercise of psychic activity. The method, in fact, by which Mr. Thompson gets rid of many of his cases is quite illegitimate. The now general belief in mind-cures, so far from rendering more difficult our faith in the other narratives, makes it far easier, because it lays bare something of the richness of psychical power; while it also enormously strengthens the general sense of the trustworthiness of the narrative. It is amazing that these discoveries should be made use of against the miraculous. Not only this, but the increase of interest in mysticism and certain forms of Oriental religion, while it may not always be Christian in tendency, is sometimes even the direct opposite, yet is evidence that men are growing wearied of the intellectual way of looking at things and are seeking for modes of knowledge more intimate and spiritual, and also for powers that are beyond the normal. I am not commending this tendency in all its aspects, but its existence is evidence of a vast movement of the human spirit which will sweep away our Western incredulity and leave such arguments as those of this book stranded with an earlier attack on "Supernatural Religion." The belief in freedom, which was rapidly vanishing a generation ago, is coming back with a rush, and though that rush will produce, is producing, many results

not favourable to the Christian Faith, it will at least remove some of the antecedent objections to considering its evidence.

More and more does it seem clear that we have to do with a universe in which being exists on different levels. There is the mechanical level of the physicists, or inorganic Nature; there is the sentient life of the animal world; and the character-making, active life of man; in the latter we discern alike in ourselves and others many different levels — the emotional, the intellectual, the spiritual. All are interpenetrating and none (probably not even the mechanism of Nature) exist in active isolation. But it is, roughly speaking, convenient to divide the world in this way. Now, just as there are certain powers dependent on the active use of the intellect, so there are levels of knowledge and insight that are beyond the reach of the intellect and only very imperfectly to be expressed by its categories. These levels alike of knowledge and of power are the region in which events called miraculous properly are to be expected — events, that is, not to be brought about by the normal activities of the physical world or by those of man's intellectual scientific knowledge of it.

It is this fact in which we find the answer to that very popular objection to miracles, that believers in them only see God "in the gaps" of the natural order, or, as Mr. Thompson puts it, the only way to save the true supernatural is to deny the miraculous. As has been said before, the only "supernatural"

which such a view can save is a Pantheism. Christians no more deny God's presence in the world, because they assert His action above and beyond it, than a believer in the Sacramental presence denies His presence in every time and place. On this point I said something in the third lecture. What we do deny is that God is no more than the world, which is His work and not Himself. We refuse to imprison God in Nature or to assert this immanence in such a way as to deny His transcendence. The ordinary working of natural laws, if we so phrase it, may be called the indirect and the miracle the direct act of spiritual power. I may be serving God equally when I clean my boots as when I say my prayers, but I am not serving Him the same way — and miracles are no more than analogous; they are to ordinary events what worship is to work. It may be true that

"God is seen God
In the star, in the stone, in the flesh, in the soul and the clod."

But He is seen to be God more fully in living beings than in dead matter, in developing man than in brute beasts, in the spiritual levels of life rather than the animal or intellectual. So, though He may be everywhere present in natural facts, there may be some which set forth His presence and His power over, not merely in, Nature by some startling and unique effect, like the Resurrection; and thus we are able to say with Westcott: "Christianity rests on the conviction that in the Life and Death

and Resurrection of Christ something absolutely new and unparalleled has been added to the experience of man, something new objectively and not simply new as a combination or interpretation of earlier or existing phenomena; that in Christ heaven and earth have been historically united; that in Him this union can be made real through all time to each believer; that His Nature and Person are such that in Him each man and all men can find a complete and harmonious consummation in an external order. The Life of Christ is something absolutely unique in the history of the world — unique not in degree but in kind. It is related to all else that is unfolded in time, as birth, for example, is related to the development of the individual." And thus, as he says elsewhere, "miracles are more properly the substance than the proof of revelation," and they are rightly needed in any revelation of redemption that embraces the whole of being and stops short at no partial manifestation.

True, such acts must be rare from the nature of the case. Yet that they occur in connection with times or persons of special spiritual endowment was (until recently) the common opinion. For it seems to me beyond question that in the so-called ecclesiastical miracles there is a greater substratum of fact than it is now fashionable to allow. For instance, in regard to the cases mentioned by Mr. Thompson, I find his reasoning quite uncon-

vincing — whether in his minimising account of the Franciscan story or of that related of Father John of Cronstadt. It seems to me the purest perversity to deny that the cure mentioned in the latter was a direct answer to prayer. Indeed the view which such an interpretation gives as to the writer's notions of prayer is one more argument against his whole position. I believe indeed that stranger things have happened, and are now happening, than we can account for by any ordinary means. But in our Western world we have become so attuned to the mechanical method that we have neither eyes nor ears for any other. This obsession, which is a veritable superstition, is now passing. There is an increasing recognition that at certain levels of psychic experience powers may be tapped which are abnormal. With this recognition there will come once more the hope of approaching fairly the remarkable galaxy of such events which we contemplate in the New Testament.

VII

For one thing comes out more clearly than anything else from Mr. Thompson's analysis, the volume of the experiences. If the reader did not know the fact before, he is hardly like to be unaware, after reading Mr. Thompson's work, of the number and variety of supra-normal occurrences which are recorded — even if we grant, which I do not, that

he can erase all the cures and treat them as ordinary. It appears clearer than ever that the New Testament is soaked through and through with miracle. The task of removing it is Sisyphean. As fast as one is rolled away another appears. To effect his object a mountain of critical ingenuity has to be constructed. And it is. Theory is piled upon theory, interpretation added to interpretation, every possible aid is taken from textual criticism and speculative mythology, every form of non-natural explanation exhausted before the records can be "purged of their offence." When they are, the reader is left asking himself, Where will all this end? If so much is taken, what is there that really remains? If the narrative has to be so mutilated, why not go the whole hog with the school of Drews or Jensen? Even then he has this most difficult problem before him: Are the facts, as trimmed and fitted into normal categories, adequate to account for the martyrs and the saints, for the history of the Church, for modern missions and Augustine's conversion? I do not say that they can be proved to be inadequate if you choose to postulate enough of the creative religious instinct, but to me it seems a far more probable and reasonable course to accept the story substantially as it stands; to admit that we are here in face of some unique operation of that *Amor che move il sole, e l' altre stelle,* and to accept that summary of the experience in the society which it created.

True, this leaves us in presence of a mystery, and no one can assert that there are no difficulties. Yet what corner of life is without it? Is it not most probable that some of our difficulties are due to the very abnormality of the facts men tried to recall? A religious account of the world without mystery is not a religious account at all. As Dr. Sanday said in his sermon on the book, printed in *The Guardian* for May 12, 1911.

"Can we expect to make both ends absolutely meet? Is there to be no margin that we are obliged to leave open? Is there to be no element of mystery in which we must needs acquiesce as mystery, until we know even as we are known? If that were so, the field of religious belief would be different from all the rest of human life; it would have in it less of mystery just at the point where we should expect that it would have more. In short, it would approximate more and more to that type which the poet described as —

> A reasoning self-sufficing thing,
> An intellectual All-in-All!

"I do not think that that is exactly the type that most Christians would wish to aspire to; and I do not think that they are under any obligation to aspire to it."

No one would deny the superficial plausibility of this book any more than they would that of the *Jesus according to S. Mark*. But both are in my judgment fundamentally vicious historically, and

the supercilious treatment of the Founder, "Jesus was no theologian," does not commend the author's thesis to a reverent mind. On the whole a perusal of the books strengthens rather than weakens one's hold on the miraculous and shews how much it is an integral part of the Gospel; how bare and drab is the view of things disclosed by unbelief. The real question is whether there is anything beyond the world. If there be such things as real change, fresh experiences, creative evolution, then there is no antecedent difficulty and the evidence for the great Christian Fact seems to me to be irresistible. If there is not, if we are tied to a mechanical theory of nature, then of course we must find some way of getting rid of the abnormal from these narratives. But then also we must reject a God living and active behind the phantasmagoria of sense; we must give up our sense of a world of struggling and choosing men, and then must set aside the hope of a whole creation of redeemed spirits existing in a risen life.

The question is not about law or no law in the universe, but whether the law we normally see in operation, or think we do, be a part or the whole; whether there is any real freedom in the universe; whether life is really the working out of purely mechanical relations, all of whose problems might ultimately be solved by some super-Babbage with an improved calculating machine; or whether it is wiser to think of it as existing on different levels — the mechanical, the sentient, the animal, and

intellectual, the spiritual — and admit that they all interpenetrate to such an extent that the irruptions of life at the last level produce great and unpredictable disturbances in the world of sense.

NOTES

NOTES

I

ARMAGEDDON OR THE INTELLECTUAL CHAOS

(1) Bussell's (Dr. F. W.) *Bampton Lectures, 1905* (Methuen & Co.), p. 225.[1]

(2) On this point see Bussell's *Bampton Lectures.* He points out that it "is thought by some to be a philosophical achievement and an act of creditable daring to call the sum of things God" and argues the futility of this gilded atheism.

"It is no novelty to accuse modern Hegelianism and ancient Stoicism of being indistinguishable from pure Naturalism, of employing terms out of their current usage, rather from habit and a desire for comprehension than from any conscious wish to deceive. . . .

"The tendency to save the comfort of religious terms without their meaning or object will always satisfy many who cannot bear to lose at one blow the traditional scheme of life. . . .

"It mitigates the horror of determinism, and if it bring some vague solace to those who are able to entertain it, it fulfils that standard of usefulness which is the sole ultimate test of creeds as of institutions. Founded securely

[1] The passages from Bussell's *Bampton Lectures* here quoted are printed by permission of Dr. Bussell and Messrs. Methuen & Co., Ltd.

on faith and sentiment (personal but incommunicable), it can resolutely close the ears to outward remonstrance on the part of pure Positivism or moralistic Religion." — Bussell's (Dr. F. W.) *Bampton Lectures, 1905*, p. 113.

(3) "We shall grasp eagerly at any intimation that God cares for us, has work for us to do; nay has need of our help. It is on this secret or silent conviction that Western life has been founded with its strange and anomalous features of self-repression and common action, wild personal enterprise, and reverence for custom and tradition." — Bussell's *Bampton Lectures*, p. 133.

(4) Bergson gives an admirable account of the prevailing tendency, which makes everything deducible from the laws of matter and motion; a fact which, if it were the case, would mean that we are all in a dead world, working itself out like a machine.

"Les explications mécanistiques, disions nous, sont valables pour les systèmes que notre pensée détache artificiellement du tout. Mais du tout lui-même et des systèmes, qui dans ce tout, se constituent naturellement à son image, on ne peut admettre *a priori*, qu'ils soient explicables mécaniquement, car alors le temps serait inutile, et même irréel. L'essence des explications mécaniques est en effet de considérer l'avenir et le passé comme calculables en fonction du présent, et de prétendre ainsi que *tout est donné*." — Bergson's *L'Evolution Créatrice*, p. 40.

And then Du Reynaud.

"The time is passing when men can comfortably suppose that Christian *behaviour* outlasts Christian *dogma*." — Bussell's *Bampton Lectures*, p. 133.

(5) *Tancred*, by B. Disraeli, Earl of Beaconsfield (Longmans, Green & Co.).

(6) Carnegie's (Canon W. H.) *Churchmanship and Character* (John Murray), p. xiv.

(7) Eucken's (Prof. R.) *The Problem of Human Life* (T. Fisher Unwin), p. 297.

(8) Eucken's (Prof. R.) *Christianity and the New Idealism* (Harper & Brothers).

(9) Wister's (Owen) *Lady Baltimore* (Macmillan & Co., Ltd.).

(10) Masterman's (C. F. G.) *The Condition of England* (Methuen & Co., Ltd.).

(11) Haldane's (Lord) *Universities and Public Life* (John Murray).

(12) James's (Prof. William) *A Pluralistic Universe* (Longmans, Green & Co.).

(13) "B. D." in *Pax*.

(14) Prichard's (H. A.) *Kant's Theory of Knowledge* (Clarendon Press, Oxford).

(15) Joseph in *Mind*, October, 1910.

(16) Galloway's (Dr. G.) *Principles of Religious Development* (Macmillan & Co., Ltd.).

(17) Mill's (J. S.) *Three Essays on Religion* (Longmans, Green & Co.), "On Nature," pp. 29, 30.

(18) Pearson's (Prof. Karl) *The Grammar of Science*, 3rd Edition (A. & C. Black), p. 153–4.

It is fair to say that the writer furnishes a mathematical proof, which in his view is conclusive, that "miracles are incredible" (p. 142), and indeed he would apparently be willing to persecute all believers in mystical or ecstatic state as pernicious to social welfare (p. 138). But it does not seem that this position is consistent with that taken up in a later chapter on "Contingency and Correlation." Mr. R. A. Bray, in an article in the *Daily News*, called attention to the significance of Professor Pearson's treatment of causation, and agreed that his view leads right on to some such view of the world as that outlined by M. Bergson. The point here to note

is the insistence on the individuality of things and the contingency in all events and the discarding of the idea of absolute fixity. Certainly if the Christian view be true that this world is encompassed by an invisible world of spirits, then that this activity should be responsible for that kind of variation we term miracle is natural enough. He points out that "all the universe provides man is likeness in variations; he has thrust function into it, because he desired to economise his limited intellectual energy" (p. 167). No believer in the fact of miracles can surely want more than this. "We have tried to get all things under a perfectly inelastic category of cause and effect. It has led to our disregarding the fundamental truth that nothing in the universe repeats itself." The writer of course disbelieves in will as a cause and refuses to consider it as in any way different from other phenomena of sequence. But he certainly shows how on the side of science, if he accurately represents it, it is nonsense to talk of the absurdity of such events as the Resurrection on the hypothesis that this world is not all; an hypothesis which is in no way ruled out by his own theory, which is "purely" agnostic.

(19) Bierbaum's (Prof. Otto J.), *Dostoieffsky and Nietzsche, Hibbert Journal*, July, 1911, pp. 827–8, 837.

(20) Garrod's (H. W.) *The Religion of all Good Men* (Constable & Co., Ltd.).

(21) Sturt's (H.) *The Idea of a Free Church* (Macmillan & Co., Ltd.).

(22) Hay's (J. S.) *The Amazing Emperor Heliogabalus* (Macmillan & Co., Ltd.).

(23) In the *Hibbert Journal*, October, 1910. *Cf.* also the following passage from Sir Oliver Lodge's *The Christian Idea of God* (*Hibbert Journal*, July, 1911, p. 704):—

"The modern superstition about the universe is that, being suffused with law and order, it contains nothing personal, nothing indeterminate, nothing unforseen; that there is no room for the free activity of intelligent beings, that everything is mechanically determined, so that given the velocity and acceleration and position of every atom at any instant the whole future would be unravelled by sufficient mathematical power. The doctrine of Christianity and Determinism is supposed to be based upon experience. But experience includes experience of the actions of human beings; and some of them certainly appear to be of a capricious and undetermined character. Or without considering human beings, watch the orbits of a group of flies as they play; they are manifestly not controlled completely by mechanical laws as are the motions of the planets. The simplest view of their activity is that it is self-determined, that they are flying about at their own will, and turning when and where they choose. The conservation of energy has nothing to say against it. Here we see free-will in its simplest form. To suppose anything else in such a case; to suppose that every twist could have been predicted through all eternity, is to introduce preternatural complexity, and is quite unnecessary. Why not assume what is manifestly the truth, that free-will exists and has to be reckoned with, that the universe is not a machine subject to outside forces, but a living organism with initiations of its own; and that the laws which govern it, though they include mechanical and physical and chemical laws, are not limited to those, but involve other and higher abstractions which may perhaps some day be formulated for life and mind and spirit?"

And further on he continues (710) in reference to the influence of departed spirits:

"The region of the miraculous, it is called, and the bare possibility of its existence has been hastily and illegitimately denied. But so long as we do not imagine it to be a region denuded of a Law and Order of its own, akin to the law and order of the psychological realm, our denial has no foundation. The existence of such a region may be established by experience; its non-existence cannot be established, for non-experience of it might merely mean that, owing to deficiencies of our sense organs, it was beyond our ken. In judging from what are called miracles, we must be guided by historical evidence and literary criticism. We need not urge *a priori* objections to them on scientific grounds. They need be no more impossible, no more lawless than the interference of a human being would seem to a colony of ants or bees."

(24) "It is time that attention was directed to the forces, intellectual and social, which are slowly but surely dissolving our Western civilisation." — Bussell's *Bampton Lectures*, p. 145.

(25) "There is a very large audience waiting, quite free from *a priori* notions of the possibility of a revelation, from any understanding of mere historic accuracy — waiting, I say, for an answer to this question, which has recently gained in loudness and insistency: Can we afford to do without Christ?" — Bussell, *ibid.*, p. 55.

II

BABYLON OR THE MODERN CRISIS

(1) Cram's (R. A.) *The Gothic Quest* (Gay & Hancock, Ltd.).

"Can we as architects answer enthusiastically to the call of men who desire a Christian Church bringing to

their assistance, not the considerations of a tradesman, but the fire of an artist? . . . Can we come to look upon architecture as a part of the vast language of art, the exalted privilege of which is the expression of the emotions, of the loftiest achievements of the soul of man, as they can be expressed by no other human power?

"I believe we can. At all events we must if we care for our art at all except as a means of making, or trying to make, a living. We shall have much to fight against. We shall find opposing us a great civilisation that hates religion, or scorns it; a civilisation made up very largely of an un-Christian economic system, a sordid and unhonoured society, venal and corrupt politics, rampant commercialism, narrow ideals." — Cram, *ibid.*, pp. 200–1.

Cf. also the following passage from a very different writer. Professor Babbitt, in *The New Laokoon*, writes:

"If the arts lack dignity, centrality, repose, it is because the men of the present have no centre, no sense of anything fixed and permanent either within or without themselves, that they may oppose to the flux of phenomena and the torrent of impressions. In a word, if confusion has crept into the arts, it is merely a special aspect, of a more general malady, of that excess of sentimental and scientific naturalism from which, if my diagnosis be correct, the occidental world is now suffering. It remains therefore for us to consider whether there is any means by which we may react in just measure against this naturalism — by which we may recover humanistic standards without ceasing to be vital and spontaneous or in any way reverting to formalism." — Babbitt's *The New Laokoon*, p. 185.

(2) Arnold's (Matthew) *Stanzas in Memory of the Author of Obermann* (Macmillan & Co., Ltd.).

(3) Ruskin's (John) *Seven Lamps of Architecture* (G. Allen & Sons, Ltd.).

(4) Bussell's (Dr. F. W.) "Christian Theology and Social Progress" (*Bampton Lectures*) (Methuen & Co., Ltd.).

(5) Wells's (H. G.) *New Worlds for Old* (Constable & Co., Ltd.) has an illuminating chapter on this topic.

(6) Dickinson's (G. Lowes) *Justice and Liberty* (Dent & Sons, Ltd.), p. 71.

(7) *Ibid.*, p. 129.

(8) Cooper's (E. H.) *Twentieth Century Child* (John Lane).

(9) Masterman's (C. F. G.) *The Condition of England.*

(10) Morris's (William) *The Earthly Paradise* (Longmans, Green & Co.)

(11) Cram's (R. A.) *The Gothic Quest* (Gay and Hancock, Ltd.), pp. 81–2.

"It is no explanation of the hideousness of life and the puerile mimicry of art which exist today to say that we in this country [the United States] have no time for art and the other amenities of life. On the contrary we all know that art is *not* a scientific or economic product. We know that it is a mental temper, a spiritual condition, and we know that it is just as much an adjunct of wholesome life as is bodily health. We *have* time enough for art, much more than many peoples have possessed in the past. Beauty takes no time. A good church can be built as quickly as a bad church. It takes no longer to paint a good than a poor picture — much less in fact. We spend in a year more money on what we are pleased to call art education than was spent in Italy during the whole fourteenth century."

And again a little further on:

"If we are to possess a civilisation which is *worth* expressing itself artistically, we must do something besides establish art-lectureships; we must change the conditions of life; the temper of the people" p. 93.

(12) Cf. Bussell's "Christian Theology and Social Progress" (*Bampton Lectures*), p. 319.

"Other religions start from a sublime idea of perfection and come down to average human level with reluctance or condescension. But Christianity starts with proposing to the sinner the spectacle of a suffering criminal; and thus, by at once meeting the distressed and the degraded on their own ground, raises on this basis a theology which the wisest cannot exhaust.

"Other systems begin deductively, not with the variety and complexity of our life, but with the unity and harmony of the whole; they are brought down, puzzled and perplexed, to the 'principium individuationis' (if I may in this connection use the phrase) and to the 'problem of Evil.' Christianity boldly confronts the difficulty which they explain away with devious or plausible argument or else altogether avoid; it starts with the weakness of God and the sin and sorrow of pain, and on this foundation of fact, that may not be gainsaid, builds its edifice of morals, of piety, and of hope.

"It is strange that this unvarying appeal to 'faith,' a belief in a reality so different to its 'appearances,' does not prevent the message from being 'understood' even by the humblest. Indeed, understanding that is to move men to action and endeavour must always be of this character; flawless knowledge, which mirrors unchanging verities, carries no such incentive or stimulus. 'To know one's self as a perfect member of a perfect whole' is a definition of religion which for most men would have no meaning."

(13) Eucken's (R.) *The Meaning and Value of Life* (A. & C. Black), p. 139.

(14) Eucken (R.), *ibid.*, p. 140.

(15) Eucken (R.), *ibid.*, p. 57.

(16) Eucken (R.), *ibid.*, p. 72.

(17) Lodge's (Sir Oliver) *Men and the Universe* (Methuen), pp. 6, 8, 22 f.

III

CALVARY OR THE CHALLENGE OF THE CROSS

(1) Bussell's (Dr. F. W.) *Bampton Lectures, 1905*, p. 121.

"The substance of my contention, as of every earnest Christian and every genuine philosopher, is to assure the one known reality of its sovereign importance and value, not merely as a bye-product, an accidental epiphenomenon, on the surface of an unending evolution, but as the supreme centre of life, and being, and thought."

And again, *ibid.*, p. 134:

"The Gospel transfers the interest from a secular or cosmic process to the single life. If science can take nothing into account but the fortunes of a solar system or a sidereal universe, the gradual changes of a species, the normal man, dismayed at these immensities, returns to his own pressing needs.

"The individual claims (as we have seen) to be the subject of a heavenly solicitude; and among religious beliefs must always prefer that system which assures to him, spite of all seeming and present loss, a central place, an ultimate victory. Now the Gospel appeals to him because in its very essence it is a protest against Law; it enlists its sympathy because Right is weak and not powerful."

For the individualist basis of all true social feeling, see the following:

"The conception of life is only 'social,' and devoted to the common good, because it is primarily and profoundly 'individualistic'. Only the man assured of the lasting worth and dignity of his own life, of the safety of his happiness in the hands of God, can afford to sacrifice it for the benefit of others, in whom he sees children of a common father." — *Ibid.*, p. 141.

(2) Professor Drews, in *The Christ Myth*, sets himself to show that our Lord never had any historical existence at all. The interesting point is that he does this avowedly in the interests of religion of the Pantheistic type. He declares that the belief in the historic personality of Jesus is the great obstacle to the universal triumph of "Monism." Mr. J. M. Robertson has developed his views in *Pagan Christs*, a work in which he endeavours to shew that neither Jesus nor Buddha ever had an historical existence, and seems inclined to surrender other well known historic persons like Montanus. Jensen claims that his view is less radical; his point is not that Jesus had no historical existence, but that the Jesus of the Gospel never lived. See the pamphlet, P. Jensen, *Hat der Jesus der Evangelien wirklich gelebt?* The whole is developed in connection with a theory of the Gilgamesch Epos, which is one of the wildest doctrines ever put forward in good faith, and sweeps not only our Lord, but Moses, S. Paul, and others all into one net, regarding them as successive embodiments of the mythical hero-god. The theory is wilder than the wildest exercises of superstition, and I cannot for the life of me imagine why the medieval peasant, who believes some story which is probably no more than an exaggeration of a real experience, and at least is spiritually edifying, is to be treated with contempt, while a modern scholar, with all the resources of civilisation at his back, who invents a doctrine so fan-

tastic as this is only regarded as a little extreme. For what is abundantly clear is that the whole foundation of Jensen's theory is the belief which he shares with the ordinary "liberal," like his opponent Julicher, that the strange stories must be false. He says this himself in his reply to Julicher: "Nun aber der Charakter schon des vom ältesten Evangelium, dem des Markus, Bezeugten. Darin treffen wir bekanntlich auf eine ununterbrochene Reihe von Dingen, die so nicht geschehen sein können. Ich brauche nur zu erinnern an das sichtbare Herabkommen des Geistes Gottes, an die Stillung des Sturms, an die erste und die zweite wunderbare Speisung u.s.w. oder an so manche Heilungen durch Jesus, hinter die jeder Mediziner ein 'unmöglich' schreiben müsste. Das heisst: bereits in der ältesten für uns konstruierbaren und der ältesten uns bekannten Gestalt der evangelischen Überlieferung finden wir so zahllose mythologische Elemente, dass sie allein schon eine höchst kritische Betrachtung der ganzen Geschichte notwendig machen. Ohne jede Frage könnte ihr deshalb doch ein sogar recht umfangreicher geschichtlicher Kern zugrunde liegen" (*Hat der Jesus der Evangelien wirklich gelebt?* pp. 17, 18). And he then goes on to say that his theory of Moses, Paul, and Jesus, each being embodiments of the Babylonian, the God-Man Gilgamesch, supplies the necessary historical foundation. If anyone wants any evidences of the aberrations to which the refusal to allow the miraculous can drive learned and intelligent men, he could not do better than read the so-called arguments and parables of the pamphlet *Moses, Jesus, Paulus, Drei Varianten des babylonischen Gottmenschen Gilgamesch.* This is all, moreover, in the name of an "ernsten, wissenschaftlichen voraussetzungslosen folgerichtigen Kritik" as opposed to the "Fanatismus blossen Glaubens."

(3) Cheyne (Dr. G. K.), in *Hibbert Journal*, July, 1911. Cf. also the following passage from the same critic.

"The section which does appear to require immediately a fuller investigation is that of the Passion, i.e., from the Last Supper to the Death on the Cross. Is there any historical nucleus? As the critical enquiry stands at present, one may reasonably hold that an extraordinary teacher and healer called Jesus, who began his career in Galilee, incurred the displeasure of the Roman authorities, and suffered the extreme penalty as a rebellious and unrecognised 'king of the Jews.' But is it not possible that the statements of the Messianic claims of Jesus, and consequently also of the intervention of the procurator may be imaginary? . . . For my own part, I think that the Barabbas story may be most simply explained from a Babylonian source. As Zimmern has shewn, there are traces of a primitive custom of decking out some person of inferior rank as king, and finally putting him to death in place of the real king. On the occasion of what ceremony this took place does not appear, and it seems plain that the author of the Barabbas story only knew of a far-off reflection of the primitive custom in the shape of a popular story. As for the name of Barabbas it is surely a corruption of Karabas, . . . which probably indicates the Arabian origin of this supposed fierce bandit. . . . As the evidence now stands, I think that Paul most probably knew a little about a great teacher called Jesus, and that he identified him with the pre-existing Christ from an intuition that only so could the precious doctrine of the Christ be made a practical power among mankind." — *Hibbert Journal*, April, 1911.

(4) *The Commonwealth*, Sept., 1909, p. 284.

(5) Eucken's (Prof. R.) *Meaning and Value of Life* (A. & C. Black), pp. 26–27.

"As the solutions of Religion and Immanental Idealism have gradually lost their force, nature has come to mean more and more to man, eventually constituting his whole world and his whole being. We do not mean Nature as she is in herself — for to modern thought the thing in itself remains a dark and inscrutable mystery — but Nature as she appears to man from a certain point of view — i.e., from the standpoint of mechanical causation. Though natural science is very far from actually maintaining the identity of the world with nature — this being no scientific theory, but merely the creed of a naturalistic philosophy — still the creed has its roots in the discoveries of science, and there is today a growing tendency to interpret science in a naturalistic spirit. Our modern era began, at the Enlightenment, with the sharp separation of nature from soul. The more insistent the demand for a soulless nature, the more urgent the claim that the soul should exist in its own right. But from the very outset there was something far more imposing in nature's illimitable vastness than in a number of dispersed individualities; and, as nature's realm continued to expand, it was inevitable that the soul should tend to be drawn within it. Not only has its empirical existence been shown even more and more clearly to be dependent on natural conditions, but there has been an attempt to appropriate its very essence, and eventually to fit it wholly into the framework of an enlarged naturalistic scheme. There has been a continually growing tendency to identify science with natural science, and reality with nature. If any difference were still felt to persist, it seemed to vanish — together with the doubts this solution naturally engendered — before the steady advance of a mechanical doctrine of development. This doctrine claimed to assimilate man entirely to nature — a nature destitute of all

inner principle of cohesion, and possessing no spontaneity of its own. Thus it was proper, and indeed inevitable, that the attempt should be made to give a value to human life when considered as a mere part of a natural process, and to shew that it was really worth the living."

(6) In an Essay printed in James's (William) *The Will to Believe* (Longmans, Green & Co.), p. 145.

The following passage from Eucken's *Meaning and Value of Life* (A. & C. Black), pp. 94–95, is worthy of note:

"Freedom is essential if life is to have a meaning. It must be possible to give a personal stamp to our activity, and press forward to a life that is autonomous. Otherwise our life is not wholly our own, but rather something assigned to us by nature or by destiny, something that transpires within us, but is in no sense moulded by us. A half-alien experience of this kind, a rôle imposed on us from without, must ever leave us inwardly indifferent to its claims, and our life would labour under a paralyzing contradiction if that to which we were cold and indifferent should succeed in winning our whole energy, and becoming for us a matter of personal responsibility.

"But freedom, in the sense which concerns us here, finds little favour with the modern mind. On all hands we are told that the old problem is at last solved, that man is nothing more than a piece of the cosmic mechanism, and that only an inexact mind can discover in the machinery any loophole whatsoever for freedom. Thus freedom is roundly rejected, and the fact that life therewith loses its self-sufficiency and intelligibility is either overlooked or treated with scant regard to the importance of its effects.

"Since, however, we are insisting on the intelligibility of life, we cannot so lightly dispense with freedom, and we are therefore bound to ask whether our proposed

treatment of the Spiritual Life does not set the problem of freedom in a more favourable light. Now, we hold that it certainly does this, and does it in a twofold way — partly through establishing truth on a new basis, and partly through the distinctive content of reality which it reveals.

"The main reason why freedom's defenders seem to be leading a forlorn hope is that science has presented us with a picture of the world, a scheme of reality, in which freedom is quite out of place. In particular, the mechanico-causal conception of nature has been carried over into human life and the experiences of the soul. That such a conception leaves no room for freedom and initiative cannot for one moment be doubted, but whether it can justly be applied to the things of the soul is open to very grave doubt indeed.

"As a matter of fact, the true significance of the life-process is not to be sought through any roundabout reference to the external world. The decisive factors are really the phenomena it exhibits and the demands it makes in the course of its own development. If we should find it displaying, at least on its highest levels, a deep-rooted spontaneity and power of initiative, then we should have to recognise this as a fundamental fact, and relegate to a secondary position the further question how to accommodate this fact with the chain of causes and effects. Never should first things take the second place; never should the experiences of the personal life be sacrificed to the demands of some particular theory. We need not trouble if our apprehension of reality is rendered less smooth and simple. How can we be certain that the world must be constituted in the exact way which happens to be most convenient for our human thinking? But this at least is obvious, that whoever reduces the world to a

mere chain of given phenomena, thereby depriving it of its spontaneity, robs it forthwith of all self-possession and all inwardness."

(7) Pringle-Pattison's (Dr. Andrew Seth) *Theism*, p. 46.

IV

SION OR THE CHRISTIAN FACT

(1) Simpson's (Dr. J. G.) *Christus Crucifixus* (Hodder & Stoughton), p. 266.

(2) There is a suggestive criticism of Dr. Sanday in the appendix to Bishop Chandler's *Faith and Experience*. The Bishop points out how Bergson's theory of the relation between intuition and reasoning provides a better rationale of the problem than does the rather dubious doctrine of the subliminal self.

(3) See Burkitt's (F. C.) *The Failure of Liberal Christianity*. The whole pamphlet is most valuable and should be studied. I am not contending that the views of either Professor Burkitt or some of the other scholars mentioned are entirely satisfactory, only that they have given up the materialistic theory of the meaning of the Christian Church. In face of existing attempts to rush us into the complete acceptance of that theory, I say that this movement is remarkable, and should give even the youngest academic person pause, before he surrenders at discretion to a view which in the last resort drives us to materialism, or at least Pantheism of a mechanical type.

(4) Eucken's (Prof. R.) *Christianity and the New Idealism*, pp. 26, 80.

"We must insist more strongly than ever that the salvation which religion promises to man is a salvation

not of his natural, but of his spiritual self, that imposes on him a momentous choice and demands of him heavy sacrifices. He who minimises the opposition that is involved, and obscures the tremendous seriousness of the issue, may easily let his religion, despite all respect for outward form, degenerate into a refined Epicureanism" (p. 26).

"Its unconditional advocacy of the claims of Spiritual Life implies the most vigorous repudiation of all naturalism, whether of the crasser or more refined kind, and the championing of freedom in the teeth of all attempts to turn life into a merely natural process. Its conviction of the wide gulf — nay, diametrical opposition — between the condition of the world and the imperative requirements of the Spiritual Life, is in itself a most decisive repudiation of Pantheism with its glorification of the world, and at the same time a repudiation of all those movements, such as Intellectualism, Æstheticism, and so on, which ignore the necessity for an inward change. Finally, its proclamation of a world-wide revolution through spiritual might and redeeming love involves the utter casting out of all embittered pessimism and despairing scepticism. With its focussing of all its conviction into a Yes or a No, Christianity gives certitude to the whole life, setting the work of thought on a safe path, and assigning it a clearly marked goal." — *Ibid.*, p. 86.

(5) Hardy's (Rev. T. J.) *The Gospel of Pain* (G. Bell & Sons, Ltd.).

(6) On "Authority," see a very valuable new book by Rev. J. H. Leckie, *Authority in Religion* (T. & T. Clark).

(7) Cram's (R. A.) *The Gothic Quest*, p. 292.

"The established ceremonies of the High Mass take

their place among the few supreme triumphs of art in all time; in a way the great artistic composition takes precedence of all in point of sheer beauty and poignant significance. There is no single building, no picture, no statue, no poem, that stands on the same level, even Parsifal is a weak imitation and substitute. In the ceremonial of the Mass art comes full tide."

(8) Bradley's (F. H.), *Mind*, No. 74, p. 171 and also p. 154. Cf. also the following dicta of Dr. Bussell, *Bampton Lectures.*

"All ultimate verdicts, where they are not temperamental petulances, are ventures of faith or acts of faith." — *Bampton Lectures*, p. 210.

"There is not the slightest warranty, in the history of mankind or of thought, for supposing that we can ever sum up the Universe as a whole except by an effort of will or an effort of faith. . . .

"It is clear that to apply any summary title to a whole, which can never be known in its totality or in its still undetected possibilities, is either an impertinence or a paradox, or — an act of faith, undertaken on account of life's practical needs. *Solvitur ambulando* is still a sufficient if unscientific solution." — *Ibid.*, p. 256–7.

(9) Cf. the following words of M. Boutroux in his valuable study *Science et Religion.*

"Chacun de mes actes, la moindre de mes paroles ou de mes pensées signifie que j'attribue quelque réalité, quelque prix à son rôle dans le monde. De la valeur objective de ce jugement je ne sais absolument rien, je n'ai nul besoin qu'on me la démontre. Si par hasard j'y réfléchis, je trouve que cette opinion n'est sans doute que l'expression de mon instinct, de mes habitudes, et de mes préjugés, personnels ou ataviques. Conformément à ces préjudices, je me suggère de m'attribuer une

tendance à perséverer dans mon être propre, de me croire capable de quelque chose, de considérer mes idées comme sérieuses, originales, utiles, de travailler à les répandre et à les faire adopter. *Rien de tout cela ne tiendrait devant le moindre examen tant soit peu scientifique. Mais sans ces illusions je ne pourrais vivre, du moins vivre en homme.*" — Boutroux's *Science et Religion*, p. 360.

I quote some further words of M. Boutroux:

"L'amour fait de deux êtres un être en laissant à chacun d'eux sa personnalité, bien plus, en accroissant, en réalisant, dans toute sa puissance la personnalité de l'un et de l'autre. L'amour n'est pas une bien extérieur, tel qu'un association d'intérêts, ce n'est pas non plus l'absorption d'une personnalité par une autre ; c'est la participation de l'être à l'être, et avec la création d'un être commun, l'achèvement de l'être des individus qui forment cette communauté." — Boutroux, *ibid.*, pp. 370–371.

"La religion offre à l'homme une vie plus riche et plus profonde que la vie simplement spontanée ou même intellectuelle, elle est une sort de synthèse ou plutôt d'union intime, et spirituelle, de l'instinct et de l'intelligence, dans laquelle chacun des deux fonde avec l'autre et par là même, transfiguré et exalté, possède une plénitude et une puissance créatrice qui lui échappe, quand il agit separément." — Boutroux, *ibid.*, p. 371.

"Si la science positive est, à elle seule, la mesure du vrai et du possible, l'homme est moins qu'il ne se croit. Car l'individualité, la personnalité, la dignité, la valeur morale, le rôle spécial, et la destinée supérieure, qu'il persiste à s'attrouper sont en contradiction, non seulement avec les conclusions actuelles, mais, ce qui est plus grave, avec les principes les méthodes et l'esprit même de la science positive."

"Naguère fasciné par la clarté et l'utilité de la science, et dominé par elle, l'esprit humain tend aujourd'hui à se ressouvenir qu'il est essentiellement vie, action, effort vers le mieux, et à réintégrer la science dans cette vie intérieure dont, en réalité, elle procède." — Boutroux, Avant-propos, p. x, of Fr. trs. Eucken, *Les Grands Courants de la Pensée Contemporaine*, X.

"[L'esprit philosophique] est raison, et en même temps, il est foi et risque: *ein Suchen und Versuchen, ein Wetten und Wagen.* Il faut savoir, il faut penser, et il faut parler. *Il faut travailler pour l'incertain.* . . . Les plus grandes créations sont celles, qui provoquent le plus de créations nouvelles." — Boutroux, *ibid.*, XIII.

APPENDIX

KING RICHARD THE THIRD AND THE REVEREND JAMES THOMPSON

(1) Thompson's (Rev. J. M.) *Miracles in the New Testament* (Edward Arnold).

(2) Cf. Loisy, *Les Evangiles Synoptiques*, i. 286–94.

(3) For this view *vide* Loisy, *ibid.*, i. 937.

(4) On this point I should like to refer the reader to Dr. Field's remarks in his admirable pamphlet "An Open Letter to the Reverend James Thompson."

(5) See Langlois (Ch. V) and Seignobos (Ch.), *Introduction to Historical Studies*. Translated by G. G. Berry (Duckworth & Co.)

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